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Public Personnel Review

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FOLLOWING THE LEADER?

Apparently seeking safety in numbers, some executives tend to rely unduly on statistical surveys of company practices for guidance in setting their own personnel policies. Thus if a majority are doing it, they seem to reason, it must be good. And sometimes, of course, it is. But there is no guarantee that any particular personnel practice is superior, or even desirable, simply because it is in widespread use.

Thus it was with something like alarm that one personnel manager forwarded to AMA a form letter that he had received from a colleague, requesting information on company practices. "We intend to review all our policies," the letter explained, and, where necessary, change them to conform to majority practice." Across the letter, AMA's correspondent had written, "Where, in the literature of management, can I find him a good lecture on the importance of not being a slave to surveys and 'majority practice'?"

This is not to suggest that quantitative surveys do not have their place among the practical tools of personnel management, but rather that they must be used with discrimination. In fact, some types of surveys provide information that cannot be obtained efficiently in any other way—data that is part of the personnel manager's stock in trade. Statistical studies of area wage rates are a good example. Moreover, a personnel manager must keep abreast of trends in personnel practices, and he will sometimes be guided by them in reviewing his own company's policies. In a competitive labor situation, for example, he must know what the companies "out in front" are offering. And surveys are a way of keeping in the know. But rarely, if ever, do they indicate a course of action, in and of themselves. The situation can be likened somewhat to that of a well-dressed woman, who certainly needs to know which way the national hemline is moving, but who selects clothes that suit her own figure, taste, and personality—and thus achieves a certain distinctiveness in her dress that sets it apart from the run-of-the-mill.

The connection here with fashion is not actually far afield, for there are periods when one personnel technique, then another, seems to be on the ascendency, and it is at such times that the dangers of imitation without discrimination are greatest. A case in point is the follow-the-leader pattern that has been evident in the field of executive development. A close scrutiny of some recent company plans reveals a suspicious degree of similarity to older established programs, with this important difference: the situations—and therefore the needs—of companies were not the same! Thus it is not uncommon to find a company top-heavy with unsuitable "programs" borrowed from large, prominent organizations. There is no harm, of course, in looking to a leading company as an exemplar. But it's a question of fit. The personnel executive who is swayed by the sheer force of numbers or the "halo effect" of a large company's prestige ("they wouldn't be doing it if it wasn't worthwhile") may be succumbing to the kind of fallacious reasoning that maintains that might makes right.

Finally, survey trends may in themselves be somewhat misleading. For this some of the onus must rest with the researchers, whose emphasis on majority practice sometimes carries with it the implication that popularity denotes worth. One result may be the slight but discernible shift in the figures in certain types of surveys that are conducted on a regular, periodic basis. Consider, for example, what sometimes happens when management opinion is rather closely divided between the value of one technique or practice as compared with another. Let us say that 55 per cent favor the first and 45 per cent favor the second. The next year's survey may well reveal a wider gap in opinion, with the majority having grown to 60 or 63 per cent.

The question is, how many were won over to the "more favored" way because it was most appropriate to their needs, and how many merely accepted the persuasion of the

(Continued on page 121)

Perspective on Promotion Policy

O. Glenn Stahl

FEW SUBJECTS in the field of personnel administration are more complex than promotion. It focuses into one omnibus problem major segments of the specialized areas of—selection, placement, efficient utilization of skills, incentives, employee relations, performance evaluation, training, and salary administration. Objectives and techniques commonly associated with each of these must be considered in any rational analysis of promotion policy. Promotion is merely a special application of many facets of a personnel system.

I prefer to use the term "promotion policy" instead of "promotion program." We cannot escape in any organization making some decisions from time to time regarding the method of administering promotions of certain career people to progressively higher levels of responsibility. These decisions, whether deliberately planned and written down or not, constitute policy.¹

In application to the federal civil service of the United States promotion policy is a matter about which one cannot afford to be dogmatic. The Executive Branch of the Government is so large, the problems so varied, the practices so diverse, that it is with some difficulty that we perceive any policy at all.

¹ Useful up-to-date reading on this subject may be found in: U. S. Civil Service Commission, *Building Better Promotion Programs*, Personnel Management Series No. 2 (Washington, D. C.: July, 1952); *Supervisory Selection in the Federal Government*. Report of Federal Manpower Policies Subcommittee (Senate Report No. 2100, 82nd Congress, July 4, 1952); Milton M. Mandell and Sally H. Greenberg, *Selecting Supervisors* (U. S. Civil Service Commission, Washington, D. C.: 1951); William E. Mosher, J. Donald Kingsley, and O. Glenn Stahl, *Public Personnel Administration* (Harper and Bros., New York: 1950), Chapter 7.

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Basic Facts

We can begin with a few facts. The federal administrative problem is completely unlike that in a municipality, however large, and quite different from that of even the largest states. Fewer than 10 percent of federal employees are located in the Washington, D. C., metropolitan area. Most of the remainder of the two million three hundred forty thousand workers are found in practically every county and municipality of every state and in every territory and possession. Over one hundred thousand of them are stationed in foreign countries at military, technical, and diplomatic posts. Many individual departments and agencies—country-wide or world-wide—are larger than any state or municipal service in the country.

Whenever there is any discussion of promotion practices in the federal service, we must bring it into an area of reality by asking: *what practices, and where?*

Furthermore, anyone familiar with the U. S. Government scene will recognize that flexibility—a much sought-for status in most aspects of public management—is very much a part of the promotion picture. Certainly there is little need to plead for more freedom of administrative discretion. Except for the transitory restrictions that have occurred periodically in appropriation bill riders,² there is already about as much flexibility as an executive could ever expect in the handling of promotions.

Pros and Cons of Federal Promotion Picture

In view of the size, complexity, and diversity of practice, some clue to federal promotion policy may be obtained by a brief review of the commonly alleged shortcomings and virtues of the government promotion situation. Each of these

² There are still some limitations on the rapidity of promotion contained in the currently applied "Whitten Rider." The U. S. Civil Service Commission has urged repeal of this rider and a bill containing such repeal had passed the Senate at the time of this writing.

conditions is true at least to one degree or another.

First, let us look at the indictment:

1. Most selecting officers are not required to search widely enough among employees in filling a job by promotion.
2. Making the qualifications and availability of people known to selecting officers is left too much to chance.
3. In small agencies there are too many dead ends.
4. Systems of evaluating and reporting on performance are neither adequate nor much respected.
5. There is too little movement between agencies in the same field location.
6. We are too dependent on letting employees "shop around" for promotional opportunities.
7. Methods for *finding* qualified employees for a given vacancy require further improvement.
8. Methods for selecting the *best* available people are too haphazard.
9. Sensible methods for selecting supervisors are particularly wanting in all but a few establishments.

Then, on the credit side of the ledger we have these points:

1. Good people do have a way of precipitating to the top.
2. Many federal agencies have very good promotional opportunities and systems within their own units.
3. There is a remarkable amount of movement of personnel among agencies.
4. Supervisors have real responsibility for the selection of their staff via the promotion channel.
5. Various methods of coordination among agencies have contributed to interdepartmental transfer and promotion:
 - a. Informal contacts between personnel officers.
 - b. In the field, the liaison afforded by field personnel councils.
 - c. The work of the Civil Service Commission's interdepartmental placement activity in Washington.

Foundations

Regardless of whether the shortcomings outweigh the virtues or vice versa, there are several approaches to federal promotion policy which I believe to be essential

and to which fairly general agreement can probably be secured.

First, we must start looking at promotion from the standpoint of the service, not merely of the employee. We should think of *jobs to be filled*, with selection from among people inside the service as *one* of the sources for *filling the jobs*. When we say "jobs," we need not confine ourselves to narrow niches; we should also mean lines of work.

When we get that perspective on promotion, we get a bird's eye view and we get away from the worm's eye view. With the worm's eye view we tend to think only of "Where can I find a place or way to promote Nellie?" or "How can I increase Nellie's salary?" With the bird's eye view we think of "How far do I need to look to get the best available person for this job?" or "What talent do we have on hand to take care of anticipated vacancies?"

A second requisite is to maintain the growing emphasis on recruitment of promotable material. This approach has been successfully used for scientific work particularly and is best exemplified in the administrative field by the Junior Management Assistant and Junior Government Assistant examinations and the administrative intern programs—both government-wide and intradepartmental. The current problem is to apply this principle to the fruitful areas without making the mistake of universal application. It is of no value to have only guards' jobs available for Ph.D.'s.

Next, we must cling to our time-tested principle of merit in selection for the maximum possible number of positions consistent with presidential control of the bureaucracy. There are still problems of definition to be worked out and gaps in the federal civil service where the merit system does not apply at all or only in part—nonpolitical posts which would normally be filled by promotion were they fully under a merit plan of appointment. Opportunities for careers and promotion will not be all that they should be so long as the merit system fight is not over.

Finally, in any scrutiny of promotion policy we must watch out for panaceas. It

is a temptation to reach for pat cures that treat all parts of the service and all conditions with a blanket effect. All situations are not taken care of by the same devices. Success of one method in a blue-collar work force should not be presumed to predict success for that method in a scientific laboratory or a clerical staff.

Undoubtedly other approaches could be listed as foundation requisites for a proper perspective on promotion policy, but the above are at least those which will probably draw wide support. The next task in this statement is to analyze the decisions that will have to be made to make a real contribution to improving federal promotion practice.

Area of Selection

Many people speak of the federal promotion system as if it were at once federal-wide, country-wide, and even world-wide. As we have already stated, the United States Government is made up of many major and widely scattered enterprises. There is good reason to doubt the wisdom and feasibility of any "program" that can be all-pervasive in the federal service—or even in Washington or in other major government centers like New York or San Francisco. For most field centers some machinery, or at least a system of communication, to facilitate interagency movement and promotion of personnel may be practicable. But sheer size gets in the way in metropolitan areas where tens of thousands of government employees work.

What we need to consider are ways to vary the area of selection from inside the service with the type of occupation. Thus, we could plan for a federal-wide approach in major centers, or even country-wide, for scanning career candidates to fill executive positions of the "generalist type" and to fill occupations that exist in small numbers in individual agencies, such as economists, statisticians, scientists, engineers, and personnel and other management specialists. For occupations and positions that exist in relatively large numbers in any one agency it is absurd to insist upon the same degree of interagency mobility of personnel as might apply to the foregoing. In these fields of heavy concentration there

is probably sufficient movement and turnover to provide a good promotion system within each organization.

The important criterion so far as area of selection is concerned is this: so long as there are (1) *ample opportunities for advancement for employees* and (2) *an adequate field of selection for management in seeking candidates*, then the general objectives of good personnel policy are being met. We must not strait-jacket the government by insistence that the same area of selection applies to all jobs or to all agencies or to all places.

It is quite likely that in many field locations there could be greater communication between federal agencies in the same general area. For types of positions that exist in more than one or two establishments a local promotional opportunity plan may entail some restrictions on supervisory latitude. It may require selecting officers to review candidates from a central certifying source in the geographical area before filling certain positions by promotion.

Methods for Internal Recruitment and Selection

Publicity.—That promotion policy and the basis for selecting candidates for promotion should be open and aboveboard goes without saying. A problem occurs in determining the degree to which individual vacancies should be advertised. Too often the announcement or "posting" of vacancies is looked upon as a panacea—the all-pervasive solution to knotty promotion issues, a solution which seems attractive because it puts responsibility on the shoulders of individual employees and appears to relieve management somewhat of its initiative and responsibility.

The arguments for vacancy advertisement have much to be said for them. (a) No mechanical skill-finding system is infallible. Soliciting employee application supplements management's techniques for ferreting out talent and interest. It helps to avoid overlooking some good bets. (b) Vacancy advertisement fosters the knowledge that promotions are being made. It keeps employees alert to the fact that advancement opportunities are open. (c) The

weeding-out task among employee applications is ordinarily not too formidable. In fact, it often presents a graceful opportunity to point out to overambitious applicants some skills or improvement needed on their part.

As to reservations about vacancy advertisement, the following must be considered: (a) A good qualifications index or record should normally turn up all who are genuinely qualified. The problem is to assure an adequate system. (b) Vacancy advertising often produces a mass of applications, many of which are irrelevant, thus handicapping the selection process. (c) Some observers feel that constant reminders of vacancies make for too much unrest and dissatisfaction among chronic, unqualified aspirants. (d) Many able employees are not disposed to apply when the initiative is left entirely to them. Professional pride, particularly among scientific and higher level workers, leads many to feel that their qualities should be known and appreciated by top management and that they should not be reduced to the humiliation of "selling their wares" in order for management to discover them. This is an understandable reaction of sensitive and competent people of high education and attainment. Even among the rank and file, it is far from true that ambition and aggressiveness in promoting one's progress is in direct correlation with one's ability and skill.

The solution to the publicity dilemma is not all one thing or the other. Publicity through bulletin board, employee newspaper, or other announcements may well be useful under certain circumstances. The evil lies in viewing it as a cure-all and in sitting back to let advertising take care of the difficult problems of promotion policy.

The use of publicity is especially valid for unusual vacancies for which qualification requirements have not been too sharply defined. It can also be used to announce a continuous need for candidates for lower level jobs filled in substantial numbers more or less continuously due to turnover. The usefulness of posting vacancies is, however, pretty much confined to a single establishment in one location. Advertising on a nation-wide or

agency-wide front is ordinarily impractical and too time-consuming.

In any event, it is hardly defensible to limit candidates for any vacancy to those who voluntarily apply in response to publicity. Any such procedure should be supplemented by consideration of candidates found through appropriate personnel records or at least by personal invitation to outstanding potential candidates to apply.

Measures and Bases for Selection.—Space will not permit a full discussion of methods for discovering the best promotional material among existing staff members. We can, however, take stock of the various major alternatives that contribute to such selection.

First, there is the obvious one of comparing performance. Not so obvious, however, are the solutions to the problems that this approach poses. The problem of "ratings" is well known. Some recent social science researches are now raising doubts about the advisability of any kind of systematic, category appraisal so far as effect on productivity is concerned. Nevertheless, it is not likely that we can afford to give up all recording of employee achievement. The quality of such reports as are used may well have considerable effect on promotion policy.

Usually of greater value for comparative purposes is some index to the qualifications of all employees. Such an index presupposes the continual feeding in to the system of all status changes, records of formal training pursued, and performance reports for all employees. The coding and maintenance under such a plan for a sizable organization creates no inconsiderable work load. Yet no good substitute has been discovered for a comprehensive qualifications index as a means for finding the names of all employees who possess the requisite knowledge and skills to be considered for a given vacancy.

A second type of criterion for promotion selection is that time-worn and admittedly objective measure—seniority. It is not to be dismissed lightly. In the heyday of civil service reform we were inclined to discount it almost too much. Seniority can play a proper part in a selection-for-promotion plan—even if it applies

only when all other considerations are comparatively equal. Assuming education, intelligence, and personality requirements are met by all candidates for a particular post, seniority may in some situations be the best available—though arbitrary—means for predicting knowledge possessed of a work program and organization. In other words, it may be *one* factor to be taken into account in a merit selection process, unless it can be shown to have an actual inverse relation to other measures of quality in a particular situation.

Third, there is the approach of objective examination—written and oral tests—as a selection device. The prime virtue of an examination in a promotion situation is that it focuses attention on the job to be filled—predicting how well candidates are likely to fulfill its requirements—rather than on past work performance. It provides an opportunity to gauge some knowledges and abilities that may be difficult to assess otherwise. It would, of course, normally be a mistake to rely entirely on an objective examination for promotion selection without any attention to a man's past performance.

Examinations are especially useful where substantial numbers of candidates need to be sorted out, where supervisory positions are being filled, and where the jobs being filled require ability not necessarily required in jobs that constitute the major source of recruitment. Failure to make adequate use of tests for such purposes is the area in which the federal service fails most. Only a few agencies, such as certain branches of the Navy Department and of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, make significant use of objective measuring instruments.

Subsidiary questions relate to how far the government should go in making promotion tests competitive and the degree to which reliance might be placed on some of the newer measures of emotional stability, including psychiatric interviews for executives. Further research is certainly necessary in these areas, but little progress is possible without further experimentation also.

Another device contributing to judicious advancement of personnel is trial on

the job. This is one of the advantages of job rotation schemes, such as internships, which allow an opportunity to observe an employee in a new situation or a variety of situations.

Finally, there is a technique of employee evaluation for promotion that is particularly suited to filling key positions—a review of candidates' qualifications, possibly including interviews, by a committee of interested officials. However formal or informal such a procedure may be, it is seldom used. Probably subconscious resistance to it, or failure even to think of it, stems from the heavy emphasis in American management on individual line responsibility wherein some one official is expected to select a key subordinate subject only to any required clearance with his own chief. Seldom does it occur to him that, in an enterprise with complex intramural human relationships, his colleagues in other units may have a legitimate interest in, and could make a real contribution to, the judgment required in filling the post.

Nor is he likely to recognize the possibilities of fostering inter-divisional cooperation by inviting their participation. As a matter of fact, line supervisory responsibility for selection could be preserved by making such examining committees advisory, although a joint decision has its merits. Furthermore, the technique adds further assurance that consideration is not confined to an heir apparent whose main qualification is proximity to the position that becomes vacant.

The important point about all these approaches to the selection of personnel for advancement is that no one of them should be viewed as an exclusive basis for selection. There are infinite combinations of methods that may be adapted to a given situation. This is where flexibility can play its part. But it is flexibility among deliberate and considered means of evaluating a situation, not the absence of careful, thorough, and objective analysis, which is the definition some people appear to give to flexibility.

A revamping of federal promotion policy would surely result in more conscious and orderly use of some or all of the tech-

niques described in the foregoing paragraphs. Certainly the civil service system could profit from better records of performance, more use of valid testing, balanced consideration of seniority, extension of job rotation, and acceptance of the utility of judgment by multiple bodies within the administrative structure.

Selection Authority

Under some state and local competitive promotion systems so little discretion is left to responsible supervisors for selection that supervisory authority is seriously weakened. Lest some of the comments above regarding committee action on promotions be misunderstood, the writer hastens to say that the supervisor who must work with an employee following his promotion should normally have more to say about his selection than any other single person. Even under a completely competitive testing system, the appointing officer should have a choice among certified eligible candidates—perhaps an even wider choice than may prevail for appointments from the outside. The practice in the federal service, of course, is so far afield from any such restrictiveness that we hardly need dwell upon it as a danger. Suffice it to say that, in efforts toward improvement, existing competitive promotion systems should not necessarily be transplanted lock, stock, and barrel.

Employee Development and Adjustment

Mention has already been made of the utility of job rotation. Its virtues lie not only in the opportunity to appraise performance without commitment to remain on a particular job but also in the training value to the employees involved.

Also, good placement sometimes requires special reassignment or transfer of individuals where their own adjustment, development, and usefulness can be improved. No promotion policy should cut off such opportunities for remedial placement, where it is for the good of the organization, by a tight requirement that certain positions can be filled only from below, thus excluding lateral transfer. The flexibility in this regard in the federal government should be preserved.

Importance of Continuous Training

No discussion of promotion policy is complete without some attention to the synchronization of well-planned training with promotional movement of personnel.

Continuous reorientation should, of course, be the basic training objective for any working staff regardless of personnel progression up the ladder. This is not the place to discuss the many methods available to keep an organization on its toes with respect to changing work programs, evolving technical advancements, or policy changes. Keeping a reservoir of potential promotees ready to fill positions at higher levels demands some even more deliberate and effective training processes.

In some federal agencies, training is tied in closely with the promotion plan. For example, in the Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance the process of filling clerical supervisor vacancies includes, first, an examination to screen candidates for entrance into a special training class. Successful completion of the course constitutes the second hurdle and automatically insures assignment to a supervisory vacancy.

Some of the newer approaches to training for higher supervisory and executive positions in the industrial world include rotation in assignment and off-the-job sabbaticals to attend university-sponsored advanced management courses. Rotation in assignment has limited possibilities in the federal service without a fundamentally new personnel system for executive levels, requiring less emphasis on specific job classification and more on person-oriented pay and tenure policies. Also, most agencies do not have authority to send even professional specialists and executives for outside training at government expense on government time. More use of either method would therefore be dependent on legislation.

Training programs that would be peculiar to government executive needs are found in the more or less untried ideas of a personnel interchange program with industry and universities, and a civilian Administrative Staff College. The military services have long had something comparable to both ideas. Reserve officers corps

provide a continuous link with people in nongovernmental pursuits, and the various military schools, particularly the National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, have long provided for military officers what an Administrative Staff College could provide for civilian executives, i.e., a broadening of administrative horizons and preparation for greater responsibility.³

Without entering into an evaluation of various means for development of employee potential, we must stress here the importance of the training concept to sound promotion policy. Whether we are speaking of minor positions or executives, a management that is not imbued with a sense of continuous need to build up employee capacity through deliberate training devices can hardly be expected to have a very fruitful promotion policy. Such considerations as an adequate area of selection and sound means of discovering the

³ See *Proposal for a Federal Administrative Staff College*, General Series Pamphlet No. 5, Society for Personnel Administration, Washington, D. C. August, 1953, 29 pp.

best talent within an organization are idle without adequately trained material to draw upon. There is vast room for improvement on this score in the federal service.

Conclusion

The most significant decisions that must be made to sharpen and clarify promotion policy in the federal civil service embrace: (1) defining the areas of selection, both geographically and occupationally; (2) improvement of measurement and evaluation devices for selection, particularly with a view to greater use of objective tests; (3) development of training techniques and programs that build up promotion potential; and (4) research on all points that can only be answered through careful analysis, such as the real qualifications needed to fill various jobs.

With this perspective on federal promotion policy, we can counteract the confusion that occurs from oversimplification and advocacy of panaceas, complex interdepartmental placement machinery, or enticingly dressed up "programs."

"Following the Leader?"

(Continued from page 114)

majority way of thinking? The possibilities for perpetuating certain practices of limited value or applicability are obvious.

In the last analysis, a company's policies and practices must be dictated by its own particular set of circumstances and the individualized needs that grow out of it. Admittedly, this is not the easiest criterion to work with. Within this framework, industry practice can be freely drawn upon. But the really discriminating per-

sonnel executive will not read survey figures with one foot on the bandwagon. While he will not forego any of the real opportunities that exist for profiting from the example of the leaders, neither will he forget that the bellwether may sometimes turn out to be a Judas sheep.—Reprinted with permission of the Editor from the March, 1954, issue of *PERSONNEL*, published by the American Management Association.

Meeting the Applicant More Than Halfway

—Clarence F. Willey

THE RECRUITMENT of an adequate number of qualified applicants for state employment involves a triple obligation—(1) to the citizens who through their legislature set up a system of civil service, (2) to the operating departments who rely on the personnel department to fill vacancies, and (3) to the applicants themselves. Efficiency must be high and costs kept low to satisfy the citizens as taxpayers. Operating departments must be provided with suitable employees to the extent that the current market permits, and the heads of these departments must be convinced that every reasonable step has been taken when vacancies cannot be satisfactorily filled. Applicants for employment are unhappy when they find themselves inconvenienced or even barred from employment opportunities by rigid rules and inflexible procedures.

A small civil service office is faced with the necessity of maintaining most of the services provided by a larger organization without the possibility of securing efficiency through an advanced degree of specialization.

Recruiting presents a peculiarly difficult problem for the reason that the small office cannot, in recruiting, be parasitic on larger civil service organizations to the extent possible in classification and examining. Furthermore, the difficulties in recruitment which have existed generally for the past ten years are intensified in a predominantly rural state which is, however, not far from metropolitan areas that exert a strong pull.

The experience of the Personnel Board of the State of Vermont in securing a substantial increase in effectiveness without a proportionate increase in staff or in expensive equipment may have value for other

personnel units of similar budget and coverage.

Recruiting Methods Assessed

The starting point of procedure revision was in evaluation of the methods in use. The conventional application blank did not give the applicant one thing he needs to know: what opportunities for employment occur most frequently. There were several corollaries to this. The applicant could not ask himself if he were interested in any of the usual entrance-level positions. He could not save himself and the department the trouble and expense of the correspondence or interviewing often needed to define areas of interest. He could not estimate how well his qualifications matched the minimum requirements for the positions in which he was interested.

The question recurred whether John Doe with an application on file would wish to take an examination to be given very soon. The Personnel Department ordinarily waited until an announcement had been released before soliciting a declaration of interest in types of employment which the applicant had neglected to mention at the time of original filing. Evaluation of minimum qualifications by the Personnel Department staff was also ordinarily postponed until after the closing date for filing. Considerable last-minute confusion frequently resulted. Sometimes the notice of rejection did not reach the applicant in time to permit him to supply additional information which might establish eligibility or to allow him to file an appeal and take the examination on a conditional basis. Determinations of eligibility sometimes had to be made with more haste than desirable in order to meet the deadline for sending out admission cards.

Admission cards were not prepared until just before the examinations, and com-

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putation cards were not prepared until after the examination had been given. This resulted in a sharp contrast between the sometimes confusing peak load of work at examination time and the better managed normal level of activity.

Applicants Screen Themselves

These difficulties, while not precluding a reasonably satisfactory level of operation, were a source of repeated annoyance to both the applicants and the personnel department staff. It seemed as though there should be a better way, and after considerable experimentation a new approach to the processing of applications was worked out. The change consists fundamentally in a shift from the question, "What kind of work do you want?" to "Are you interested in and qualified for this kind of work?"

By the new procedure the applicant is given a chance to screen himself in terms of both interest and minimum qualifications. To accomplish this:

1. An information sheet is given the applicant to supplement the application blank. (See Fig. 1, p. 124.) This information sheet tells the applicant what the common entrance levels are and states the beginning salary and minimum qualifications for these positions. It is designed not only to help the applicant but also to be an aid to counselors, employment service interviewers, and school guidance and placement officers.

2. The applicant is given an opportunity to indicate on the application blank his interest in any of these entrance level positions. (See Fig. 2, p. 125.) The applicant's pattern of interest is presented clearly enough so that it is not difficult for him to make a decision regarding probable interest in other less commonly used entrance positions. Often without further correspondence the applicant may be sent an admission card for related examinations which he is eligible to take. A form letter has proved to be sufficient explanation of this procedure to the applicant. (See Fig. 3, p. 126.)

3. If the applicant does not meet the minimum requirements for any position in which he has expressed an interest, he is notified of his ineligibility within forty-eight hours of the date of filing. If he wishes to appeal rejection from the examination, there will ordinarily be sufficient time for the appeal to be heard well in advance of the date of the written examination.

Applications Processed Continuously

This means that processing of applications for all commonly used entrance positions is continuous. Workload peaks, formerly a serious problem for a small staff, are now almost completely eliminated, since the announcement of an Examination does not bring in additional applications much in excess of the regular rate.

If the applicant is found to be eligible to take an examination he has listed or underlined, an Australian ballot-type admission card is addressed immediately; the time and place can be quickly filled in later, by "W," "O," or "P," to indicate when and where the applicant is to report for the *written*, *oral*, or *performance* test. Whether the applicant is eligible or not, a computation card is made out for each examination he wishes to take. (See Fig. 4, p. 127.) This computation card serves subsequently as a register card and as the record of availability if the applicant takes and passes the examination. Otherwise it is filed, pending the day of tabulation, as the record of ineligibility, nonappearance at the examination, or failure to qualify.

Timesaving Equipment Used

To save time in making out computation cards and admission cards, a small spirit duplicator designed for reproducing addresses, the Visi-Riter, is used. Once the original stencil has been typed, no further typing of name, address, or identification number is necessary in the standard routine of processing until the typing of a certificate of eligibles. The Visi-Riter stencil is used to imprint the applicant's folder, the letter for acknowledgment of the application, the admission card, the computation or register card (both sides), the notification of rating form and envelope, and the cards for availability inquiries. The time saved is substantial, as a name, address and identification number may be printed with the Visi-Riter in about ten seconds, compared with thirty to sixty seconds needed to type the same information on a card and to verify the accuracy of typing.

The Visi-Riter stencil, from which all subsequent impressions of the name and

To Help You In Filling Out The Vermont Personnel Department Application Blank -

We want to make sure that your name is listed for all examinations you are interested in taking. We hope the information presented below will make it easier for you to decide what opportunities in state employment you are qualified to apply for.

If you have completed the standard training for a trade, a technical specialization, or a profession, and you are interested in securing **only** that type of employment, type or print the name of your field of specialization in the No. 17 space on the application blank.

Perhaps you do not wish to limit your application to one kind of employment. If so, you may add other kinds in which you are interested in Space No. 17. Look over the types of work listed under No. 18, and underline those you are qualified for and interested in securing. If our review of your application shows that you meet the requirements for a type of work you have underlined, you will be notified of your eligibility immediately and will receive an admission card when we hold the next examination for positions in that employment grouping. If you do not meet the requirements for one or more of the types of work you have underlined, you will be notified of this immediately.

The following may help you to determine whether you would like to apply for the types of work listed under No. 18.

TYPE OF WORK	DEPARTMENTS	DESCRIPTION OF WORK	MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS	STARTING SALARY
Account Clerk	All larger Departments	Maintaining books of account.	Pertinent experience	\$ 58.00
Accountant	Auditor Highway Tax Unemployment Compensation Commission	Application of accounting theory in the maintenance and examination of accounts	Pertinent experience or college training	64.50
Administrative Assistant	Education Health Highway Institutions Public Safety Treasurer	General administration. Personnel work. Preparation of press releases and other publicity.	Pertinent practical experience	64.50
Agricultural Inspector	Agriculture	Inspection of agricultural products and of livestock and poultry. Weights and measures inspection. Checking marketing practices. Plant pest control.	Pertinent practical experience	64.50
Attendant	Institutions	Custodial and housekeeping duties in an institution. Assisting in care of patients.	None	39.00
Bank Examiner	Banking and Insurance	Examination of bank records. Requires only limited knowledge of accounting.	Pertinent experience or college training	64.50
Bookkeeping Machine Operator	All larger Departments	Operation of a standard bookkeeping machine.	Pertinent practical experience	39.00
Clerk	All Departments	Checking, posting, filing, coding, assembling information. Composing routine letters. Operating office machines.	Pertinent practical experience	34.00
Engineering Aid Apprentice	Highway	Engineering apprentice training and sub-professional engineering duties.	High school graduation; evidence of mathematical aptitude	39.00
Fish and Game Warden	Fish and Game Service	Apprehension of violators of conservation laws. Educational and investigational work.	Pertinent practical experience	51.00 (45.00 during 1 year training period).
Inspector	Liquor Control Board Health Industrial Relations	Examination of establishments for compliance with laws. Explanation of laws and regulations.	Pertinent practical experience	64.50

Figure 1

Portion of Front Side of Information Sheet Accompanying State of Vermont Application Blank

PUBLIC PERSONNEL REVIEW

address are made, is placed on the margin of the applicant's permanent examination record card. This is kept in a Visi-Record tub file for easy accessibility. A major ad-

vantage of using the Visi-Riter addressing system lies in eliminating a separate stencil card, which would require a separate file and would mean time lost in filing and

STATE OF VERMONT

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Instructions: Fill out two copies of this application on the typewriter or print in ink, and mail to Personnel Director, State Office Building, Montpelier.

1. Mr. _____
 Mrs. _____
 Miss _____
 First Name Middle Initial Last Name

Address _____
 Number Street City

State _____ Resident how long? Years _____ Months _____

Phone No.: Residence _____ Office _____

2. What is the date of your birth? _____
 Month Day Year

3. Where were you born? (a) _____
 City, State or Territory if American Born

(b) _____
 City, Province, Country, if Foreign Born

4. Are you a United States Citizen? _____
 Yes or No

If Naturalized, Give Date, City, County and State _____

5. What physical or emotional defects, infirmities or chronic diseases do you have? _____

6. Are you willing to have the Personnel Director write to your present employer in regard to your qualifications? _____
 Yes or No

7. From what source did you learn of this examination? _____

8. Have you ever filed an application for employment with the State of Vermont? _____
 Yes or No

9. Will you accept temporary employment? _____
 Yes or No

10. What is the lowest weekly salary you will accept? _____

11. In what localities will you accept employment? _____

12. How many years of high school typing did you take? _____
 Shorthand? _____ Bookkeeping? _____

13. How many words per minute can you type? _____

14. How many words per minute of shorthand can you take? _____

15. What office or other machines can you operate efficiently? _____

16. _____
 Single Married Other (Specify) Male Female Feet Inches Pounds

If you are a married woman, what was your maiden name? _____
 First Name Middle Initial Last Name

17. Positions applied for:

18. Underline types of work applied for:

Account Clerk - Accountant - Administrative Assistant -
 Attendant - Agricultural Inspector - Bank Examiner -
 Bookkeeping Machine Operator - Claims Examiner - Clerk -
 Custodian - Engineering Aid Apprentice - Fish and Game
 Warden - Inspector - Insurance Analyst - Interviewer -
 Investigator - Liquor Store Clerk - Probation and Parole
 Officer - Social Worker - Statistical Clerk - Tax Examiner.

You will be notified whether or not you are eligible for the types of work you have listed or underlined. When examinations for the positions for which you are eligible are scheduled you will be sent an admission card giving the time and place of examination.

19. Military Service: In what branch of the United States Armed

Forces was service rendered? _____

Active Service began: _____ Ended: _____

Rank on entry: _____ On separation: _____

Was active service terminated under honorable conditions? _____

Yes or No

20. Veteran's Preference: Do you claim preference as a veteran?

_____ Disabled veteran? _____ Veteran's
 Yes or No Yes or No

widow? _____ Wife of totally disabled veteran? _____
 Yes or No Yes or No

Veteran's Claim No. _____ Pension (per month) _____

21. Have you ever been discharged or forced to resign from a position?

Yes or No

(If answer is yes, explain on a separate sheet)

22. Have you ever been arrested, imprisoned, placed on probation, or fined for violation of any law or ordinance other than minor traffic violations?

Yes or No

(If answer is yes, explain on a separate sheet)

Figure 2

Front Side Application Blank of State of Vermont

JULY 1954

finding. The convenience of having the stencil on the examination record card is illustrated in the clearing of availability

after appointment, promotion, or separation. Since the examination record card must be consulted to determine what reg-

MR. GLENDON N. KING, CHAIRMAN
12 BYAM STREET, NORTHFIELD

MR. LAWRENCE H. MARVIN, MEMBER
ESSEX JUNCTION

MR. WILLIAM J. TAISEY, MEMBER
OXBOW FARM, NEWBURY



STATE OF VERMONT
PERSONNEL BOARD

NORMAN C. DAVIS, DIRECTOR
MONTPELIER, VERMONT

DEAR APPLICANT:

IN ORDER TO MAKE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STATE EMPLOYMENT AVAILABLE TO QUALIFIED PERSONS, IT IS THE POLICY OF THE PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT TO SEND ADMISSION CARDS TO APPLICANTS WHEN EXAMINATIONS FOR POSITIONS CLOSELY RELATED TO THOSE WHICH THEY HAVE SPECIFICALLY APPLIED FOR ARE BEING HELD. A REVIEW OF YOUR APPLICATION HAS SHOWN THAT YOU ARE ELIGIBLE TO TAKE A RECENTLY ANNOUNCED EXAMINATION FOR A POSITION SIMILAR TO ONE WHICH YOU LISTED OR CHECKED. THE ENCLOSED ADMISSION CARD WILL PERMIT YOU TO TAKE THIS EXAMINATION WITHOUT FURTHER FORMAL APPLICATION.

WE ARE ENCLOSING ALSO A STATEMENT OF THE DUTIES AND MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR THIS POSITION SO THAT YOU WILL BE BETTER ABLE TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT YOU WISH TO TAKE THE EXAMINATION.

FAILURE TO APPEAR FOR THIS EXAMINATION WILL HAVE NO EFFECT ON YOUR APPLICATION TO TAKE OTHER EXAMINATIONS. YOU WILL RECEIVE ADMISSION CARDS FOR THESE EXAMINATIONS AS THEY ARE SCHEDULED.

VERY TRULY YOURS,

NORMAN C. DAVIS
PERSONNEL DIRECTOR

ENCLOSURES

Figure 3
Form Letter Mailed to Applicants by State of Vermont

isters the name is on, little additional time is required to prepare the availability inquiry card for mailing. As a further aid to leveling out workloads, position titles are printed in advance of need on computation cards, admission cards, and availability inquiry cards. For this, both the Visi-Riter and an Elliott Addressograph are used. The latter is more economical when a reserve of fifty to one hundred cards of one position title must be maintained.

The Visi-Riter is also used independently of the processing of applications as an aid to maintaining employee records. A Visi-Riter stencil for the employee's name together with a code abbreviation of the name of the employing department is typed on the employee's permanent personnel status record card. This impression is then transferred to six 3 x 5 cards, which are left blank except for the stenciled im-

pression. Three of these six cards are used by the Personnel Department: one for the locator file; one for the statistical file for salary control to show how many employees are in each step of each pay grade range; and one for the statistical file for position control to show how many employees are in each class of position. The other three cards are distributed to the State Employees Retirement Board, the Employees Credit Union and the Employees Association. When an employee leaves the state service, his locator file card is placed in a separation file in which the subdivision guide card tabs show the reasons for separation. To draw off data from the salary control, position control, and separation files only a simple counting of 3 x 5 cards is necessary.

It will be seen that a significant degree of the gain in speed and accuracy possible through the use of much more elaborate

MR CHARLES COE 17 DEWEY AVENUE MONTPELIER VERMONT 0816			FIELD AUDITOR	
10 JAN 54 R.D.				
R 135	O 87.5	W 3	PR 89.8	
% 90	C 94	W 5	OC 94.8	
V 5	P-T 82.5	W 2	RK 7	OFF

Figure 4
Computation-Register Card

Name, address, identification number and position title are placed on the card as shown. "R.D." is the date the person is placed on the register, and successive availability declarations are coded to the right of the "R.D." space and down the right side of the card. "R" refers to raw score, "%" to percentage score, "C" to converted score. The "V" space gives veterans' preference points, and "O" and "P-T" refer to

oral examination score and performance or training and experience score, respectively. The "W" spaces are for weights, the "PR," "OC" and "RK" spaces are for promotional score (without veterans' preference), open-competitive score, and rank. The back of the card, also stamped with name, address, identification number and position title, is used for supplementary information.

address printing equipment may be achieved for a small civil service office. The methods developed represent an effort to copy within the limits of a much smaller operation the very thoroughly mechanized processing of applications and examinations used by the California Personnel Board. A set of the California personnel forms very kindly furnished by Mr. John F. Fisher, Executive Officer, was the original stimulus to the revision of our methods to combine continuous processing with semi-automatic reproduction of name, address, and identification number.

Advantages of Revised Recruitment Procedure

The advantages of the procedure described above in summary are as follows:

1. The information sheet provided with the application blank lets the applicant know what the commonly used entrance level positions are.
2. The information sheet also describes the duties of these entrance positions, and the applicant thus has a better basis for deciding whether a certain type of employment will hold his continued interest.
3. Giving the applicants the minimum qualifications for the common entrance level positions largely eliminates processing applications which cannot be accepted because they clearly do not meet the announced minimums.
4. The application form provides space for the expression of a number of employment interests.
5. The appeals from examination rejection which are made can be heard and disposed of well in advance of the examination. The name of a person whose appeal is acted on favorably will be on the register for the first certification from it; a certification which is often the only one that matters for the one-position classes.
6. Applicants are regularly notified of ineligibility for admission to the examination for any position not later than two days after the application is received at the personnel office.
7. Determination of areas of interest when the application is first filed makes it unnecessary to review or canvass mailing lists whenever an examination is announced.
8. A single 3 x 5 card serves for mailing list, veteran's preference record, computation card, register card, and record of availability.
9. Duplication of name, address, and identification number is accomplished rapidly and with no possibility of error by use of the Visi-Riter.

10. A supply of computation-register cards and admission cards, with position titles pre-stamped, is stockpiled during slack periods.

11. Continuous processing of applications means that much of the work incidental to administering examinations is taken care of well in advance of the date of the examination.

Other Recruiting Improvements

Several other changes have been introduced to aid recruitment:

1. An annual wage survey for all positions guarantees that entrance rates will be as attractive for state employment as for competing opportunities.
2. As far as practicable, examinations are given on a continuous basis.
3. Through the assistance of the Vermont State Employment Service, the applicant may often save travel time and expense by taking his examination at the Employment Service office nearest his home.
4. Late application no longer invariably keeps an applicant from taking an examination which is announced with a closing date for filing. The following statement is regularly placed on the cover of examination announcements: "Applications submitted subsequent to the official closing date will be accepted up to the latest feasible time prior to the holding of the examination." This could be the day of the examination.
5. Registers are never terminated; the names of persons who have not received appointments are carried over to what is a revised rather than a new register.
6. Recruiting, combined with placement, has been made a full-time responsibility of one member of the four-person administrative and professional staff.

All these measures which have been taken to speed up the processing of applications and the administration of examinations were planned with the primary thought of smoothing the way of the applicant. The gains in efficiency resulting have also improved substantially the personnel department's relations with the agencies it serves. Not the least of the benefits realized has been the significant freeing of the personnel department staff from the frustrations incidental to entanglement in unnecessarily cumbersome and inflexible modes of operation.

#

tionnaires were sent directly to respondents who were instructed to return them to the survey center and not through agency channels. Respondents could remain anonymous if they wished. Over forty percent of the trainees replied, sixty percent of the supervisors, and all of the agencies—to give what was regarded as an adequate coverage. A selected number of the questionnaires were followed up by interviews. In addition, representatives of a number of colleges who had participated in training programs were contacted.

Findings of the Survey

Although it is impossible in this brief space to give a detailed resume of the findings of the survey, some of the highlights are of general interest. The survey found that four types of training programs were in operation:

1. The *Study-Project Plan* designed for selected students in advanced undergraduate and graduate courses who wish to undertake specific projects with a government agency.
2. The *Work-Study Plan* designed for students who wish to alternate periods of a semester, academic year, or summer session of on-the-job employment with studies at educational institutions.
3. The *Preservice Internship Plan* designed for students who wish to get some orientation and first-hand experience with government on a part-time or full-time basis for periods of from three months to a year.
4. The *Full-Time Post-College Internship Plan* designed for graduates entering government service on a full-time basis.

This survey showed that each of the four types of training had its usefulness—provided the trainee and the agency understood the purpose of the program and its limitations. However, the survey also indicated that there was an inclination for several of the agencies to assume that they had established well-developed internship programs when in reality only some variation of the work-study plan had been arranged. There was also some tendency to confuse particularly the full-time post-college internship plan with the apprenticeship (or in-service training) program designed to initiate and qualify the person for a specific job. It was not always

understood that all types of preservice training programs are distinctly a part of the educational process and that the participant must be respected as a learner and not as a job-wedded employee.

The survey found that prior to World War II preservice training programs in this region were directed primarily toward the training of administrative personnel. More recently the evidence showed that there was a trend toward internships in substantive fields such as engineering, physics, psychology, etc. There seemed to be a growing recognition that the internship could be applied profitably to professional and line positions as well as staff jobs.

As might be expected, the survey found that the agencies more often than the colleges took the initiative in establishing preservice training programs, though in several cases the creation was a joint venture. While no firm conclusions were drawn as to whether programs that were jointly established were more successful, it was clear that where a pattern of training was worked out that was closely related to the educational background and learning process of the trainee, at least trainee satisfaction with the program was greater.

The recruitment of interns was not as effective as it might have been in the programs studied. About half of the programs were deficient in systematically publicizing their training opportunities and in reaching likely sources of personnel. This frequently resulted in the agency receiving a smaller and poorer group of candidates than might otherwise have been obtained. The survey did show, however, that most of the programs were moving toward objective standards of selection. Only three of the fifteen programs did not use a written examination in the selection process, and most of the programs supplemented the written examination by an oral examination or formal interview. Where the interview was used to ascertain specific interests of the trainee and possible assignments, trainee satisfaction with the internship was higher.

The orientation process proved to be the weakest phase of most of these programs. Though all but two of the pro-

grams studied had established formal orientation schedules, trainee dissatisfaction with orientation showed that a number of the agencies either did not understand its real purpose or else failed properly to indoctrinate supervisory personnel upon whom so much of the burden of orientation fell. The survey showed that orientation schedules cannot be too standardized. Some phases of orientation can be the same for all trainees, but, on the whole, orientation must be adjusted to fit the trainee's previous learning and experience if he is really to understand and adjust to his working environment. Close agency-academic institution contact during the orientation period and in the planning of complementary academic work appeared to pay great dividends in terms of program success.

Since these programs were so varied in content and purpose, it is difficult to make generalizations about actual operations. It is noteworthy that administrative trainee programs operated primarily in staff divisions while programs involving other professional personnel operated primarily in line divisions. The internships which were planned as six- to twelve-month operations were most successful, though where the program is closely tied to an academic curriculum or involves a high degree of professional training, longer periods appear justified. All but two of the programs provided for rotation in work assignments. The analysis indicated, however, that work assignments of less than a month's duration were too short to be effective training and were often frustrating to the trainee. It was also clear that, to be most effective, assignment rotation should be carried out in a work pattern sequence that has logical meaning in terms of the background and experience of the trainee. Field trips and field experience proved to be a highly useful way of giving the trainee a better perspective on his working environment.

The weakest link in the operation of the training programs was the line supervisor. The failure to select supervisors who were sympathetic to the aims of the program and properly indoctrinate them as to its objectives frequently led to doubt about

the value of the program on the part of both the supervisors and the trainees. The evidence from this survey seemed to bear out that the over-all training program for an agency should be formulated as much as possible in cooperation with the staff that will operate the program.

About half of these programs required the trainee to make periodic reports on his progress. These proved to be extremely useful even though trainees frequently felt they were an irksome chore. The reports called to the attention of the supervisor a number of shortcomings and gaps in the trainee's experience and work, and in a number of cases served as the basis for subsequent modifications in the training program.

All but two of the programs studied had a formal rating system for evaluating trainees. The significance attached to the rating, however, varied widely among employees. Where the trainee had gained probationary status, the rating was an important factor in promotion. In at least three of the programs the ratings also played a part in the determination of academic grades.

Most of the programs rated trainees on the average of every three months though four agencies made ratings more frequently. Generally speaking, the agencies which rated most frequently usually possessed a better supervised program. The analysis showed that it appeared desirable to devise a special rating form for trainees since the standard rating procedures used by the agency were not always applicable and were the source of excessive criticism by both trainees and supervisors. This survey found only a few instances in which trainees were summarily dismissed because of poor ratings prior to the completion of the training period.

Unfortunately, no precise figures on turnover and separation of trainees, either before or after they completed the training program, were obtainable so that the figures used here are merely estimates. In six of the programs the trainees were initially selected through civil service examinations and were therefore employees on a probationary status. Even so, the turnover estimates ran as high as thirty per-

cent during the first year to fifty percent of the total number trained over a five-year period. In four programs, avenues to permanent appointment were provided by the establishment of qualifying examinations. Approximately forty percent of the trainees in these programs were actually hired by this method. Five of the programs made no provisions whatsoever for absorbing trainees permanently into the agency, with the result that few trainees ever ended up in the agency's employment. Next to the lack of prospects for permanent employment, the major causes for turnover, particularly after the trainee had acquired permanent status, were for salary or personal reasons.

This survey showed that programs which make some provision to absorb trainees are more effective than those that do not. The cooperation of the supervisors is better and the morale of the trainees is higher when there is great likelihood that the trainees are to be future employees. It would appear inadvisable for the agency to recruit more than two to three times the number of trainees for which positions are available in the agency unless (1) a reasonably good outside job market exists, or (2) the trainee receives credit for some of his work at an academic institution.

Conclusion

Any over-all review of student training programs in Southern California shows that these programs have paid handsome dividends. Government agencies have recruited many outstanding personnel through preservice training who would otherwise not have been acquired. The teaching programs of academic institutions have been enriched as a result of closer contact with the operating environ-

ment of government. None of the programs studied in this survey proved to be an outright failure. In every case programs which were discontinued were later reinstated.

Because of the desirability of Southern California as a place in which to live, governmental workers, particularly at state and local government levels, are not easily persuaded to leave the area. As a result, the rates of inter-agency and inter-governmental transfer of employees are probably higher than for most other regions of the country. Agencies operating training programs in the Southern California area can therefore view them not only as agency ventures but as part of a larger program of preservice training in which a number of jurisdictions are participating.

It would be difficult to determine which level of government or what type of agency achieved the best record for preservice training programs in this region. Perhaps in recent years the federal government sparked by the Joint College-Federal Service Council has given the most leadership to the student training movement in Southern California. Nevertheless, the need of extending student training programs to all the agencies of all levels of government in this region is still great.

Consideration is now being given to the establishment of an Internship Clearing House for the Southern California area. Operated as a joint academic-governmental agency, a clearing house could undertake many functions in connection with the promotion, establishment, and coordination of preservice training programs. If eventually established, a clearing house would make the preservice training record of government agencies in Southern California even more impressive than past achievements have been.

Discussion of Lay-Off Procedures

John A. Overholt

DAVID BOARDMAN, member of the Civil Service Board of a mid-west municipal government, was calling on Frank Federal, director of personnel of one of the executive departments in Washington, D. C., under an arrangement made by the Civil Service Assembly. Preliminary greetings were soon completed, and David came right to the point:

"Frank, we anticipate a rather drastic economy program, starting within the next few months, which may require some lay-offs. We want to prepare for this program, and we have no laws or regulations to go by. That is why we want to know more about how the federal government is reducing its force. I should warn you, though, that we have heard a lot of criticism about the government's way of making lay-offs, and we may learn more about what to avoid than what to imitate."

"Well, you are not too complimentary," Frank responded, "but I think I know what you mean. What items would you like to discuss first?"

"How about putting first things first? We are both supposed to be operating under merit systems, and yet it is generally stated that federal lay-off procedures give no consideration to merit. Is that a good beginning?"

"Excellent, if you will tell me what you mean by merit," Frank replied.

"Now, don't start crawling into bureaucratic technicalities in too big a hurry," David said. "By merit, I mean that when we have to let people go, why can't we keep the better employees, and let the poorer workers go?"

"Don't get excited," Frank cautioned, "until I give you some examples. Which would you consider as the more meritorious—the young high producer who is always looking for more money working for someone else, or one who produces a little less but wants to stay with you? How would you choose between the high-pro-

ducing trouble-maker, and the pleasant and agreeable plodder, or between high production in a limited field and satisfactory performance coupled with greater versatility?"

"I think I begin to see what you mean," David conceded. "If we want to recognize merit, we will have to define merit and that may be more difficult than we had expected. However, we ought to be able at least to cut out deadwood before we reach our good employees in a reduction in force."

"That sounds obvious until you look a little deeper," Frank was warming up in the discussion. "Do your supervisors admit they have deadwood now? How do they justify keeping deadwood until a reduction in force—if it is clearly labeled and ready to be sawed off? If purging your rolls of deadwood will keep you from having to make reductions in force, why don't you do just that? Do you want to stigmatize all separated employees as deadwood, or as suspected of being deadwood, by a public announcement that you are going to use this opportunity to purge your agencies of deadwood?"

"Does that mean that we will have to go by seniority alone?" David was now grasping at straws.

"Even there, you will have to define what you mean," Frank held to his advantage in the discussion. "Seniority in government and in industry are different. In industry, seniority usually means simply 'last on—first off' in each grade of a particular occupation, such as carpenter, brakeman, draftsman, or typist. It may also include going back a grade instead of going off the rolls. Trade unions frequently stipulate the definitions which apply to lay-offs in industry. In the federal government, we have 'length of service' as a required factor, but it includes all federal civilian and military service, and is only one of several factors to be used in making selections among competing employees."

• John A. Overholt is on the Program Planning Staff of the U. S. Civil Service Commission.

This gave David his chance to move back into his role as questioner, "Tell me more about the federal system."

"Our basic law is section 12 of the Veterans' Preference Act," Frank responded, "which requires all federal agencies making reductions in force to release employees in accordance with Civil Service Commission regulations. The same law requires that these regulations give due effect to tenure of employment, veteran preference, length of service, and performance ratings."

"That sounds pretty specific," David interrupted, "but how about your definitions? What is tenure of employment?"

"You touched a sore point there," Frank answered. "We don't always know. Of course, we know that it means that persons hired on a temporary basis are to be laid off first among competing employees, and that persons who have permanent civil service status are usually the last to be reached, but we have a lot of border line cases. Sometimes an employee hired on a temporary basis, and laid off as temporary, is ordered restored months later by the Civil Service Commission because of some new interpretation based on his prior service."

"The Whitten amendment has contributed a great deal of confusion, and so has the word 'indefinite' which is defined sometimes as 'permanent,' sometimes as 'temporary' and usually means something between these two extremes. Then we have confusion as to terms used in civil-service appointments and those used in excepted appointments. I believe you said you had no laws with which your regulations will have to conform so you can steer clear of these confusing difficulties."

"Well, don't you have any guide lines to go by?" David was looking at Frank with astonishment.

"Oh, yes! Perhaps I described the situation too critically, but it is something you want to watch out for," Frank continued. "We have a fairly simple formula. We put all of our permanent people who aren't subject to some temporary restriction because of probation, temporary promotion, or limited reinstatement, at the top of the list of competing employees in retention

group I; then in retention group II we put those who are permanent but subject to one of these temporary restrictions, and at the bottom, in group III, we put those who have indefinite appointments made without regard to any permanent status. Separate lists are made for those in excepted positions. Persons appointed temporarily for short periods must be let out before any competing employees are reached, even in retention group III."

"Then I suppose you rank them on other factors?"

"Yes," Frank continued, "but only after we divide them into 'A' and 'B' subgroups to show whether or not they have veteran preference. Then in each subgroup we give retention points for years of service and for outstanding performance ratings."

"Wait a minute," David interrupted. "You're going too fast for me there. How about prior service such as census taking, carrying mail during holidays, or service in the National Guard? And how about the 5-point and 10-point preference people?"

"You're learning, all right," Frank said. "There are a lot of mysterious kinds of prior service, but generally we only count service that is creditable for retirement. In that way, we don't have so much confusion in counting service. Also, although 10-point preference employees have an advantage over 5-point preference employees in appointment, their retention rights over nonpreference employees are identical."

"But didn't you tell me the law required that due effect be given to all of the factors?" David interrupted again. "Is it due effect to keep a veteran with short service and lay off a nonveteran who has spent most of his life working for the Government?"

"That's a good question, but one that only Congress can answer," Frank explained. "After appearing to give the Commission the latitude to cope with this problem, a 'proviso' was inserted in the law forbidding the retention of any nonveteran over competing veterans who have satisfactory performance ratings. We are particularly concerned with the effect of this proviso on nonveterans who were restrained from entering military service

because their services were badly needed as civilians, and on those who suffered disabilities as the direct result of working in support of our armed forces."

"Didn't you say something about performance ratings? Does that mean that you can consider merit, after all?" David was quick to press additional points that occurred to him.

"Well, perhaps," Frank grudgingly assented. "The very few who are rated unsatisfactory cannot be kept, of course. No one can be rated outstanding unless he is so outstanding that he deserves special commendation for everything he does, and he gets only a 4-point advantage in his own retention group and subgroup. That doesn't give us much merit in our formula."

"You mentioned 'competing employees,'" David asked after a short pause. "What are they competing for?"

"That is a very interesting point," Frank responded. "It has led to some improvements in our regulations. We had worried because the law said nothing about qualifications in reductions in force. However, it did provide that only competing employees are to be considered. They are not competing to be let out—they are competing to be retained. They can be retained only in specific jobs—either in their old jobs, or in new jobs. They have to be qualified before they can compete. Furthermore, since there is no probationary period, and the work can't be suspended while they learn new skills, they must have more than minimum qualifications. When they compete for retention in particular positions in a reduction in force, they must have all the skills and abilities needed in such positions."

"How broad is this competition?" David pressed further. "Is it limited to a small group? Does it extend throughout an agency? Is it as wide as the federal government service?"

"It is as wide as it can be practically applied," Frank responded. "The normal competitive area for a reduction in force in the federal service is all of a bureau within the local commuting area, or all of a field activity in a local commuting area. Within this area, there are numerous com-

petitive levels, each consisting of all employees who are interchangeable in their present positions. This means that they are doing practically the same work within the same grade or range of pay, although not necessarily at the same pay rate. As I said before, civil-service employees are not interchangeable with excepted employees because they are subject to entirely different rules. Competing employees in each competitive level are listed on retention registers, by retention groups, and subgroups, and by retention points within subgroups. Those who cannot be retained in their present positions are selected in precise order from the bottom of the register. Ties are broken by half-years of service, if possible. No exceptions are permitted, except where necessary to keep from displacing a qualified person by one who cannot perform the work. High preference employees who lose out in this competition are given further chances, if possible, to go into other jobs and be retained, even if they displace other employees with lower preference. Usually these displacements are made only where there is higher retention subgroup standing, but can be made on a point basis within a retention subgroup when an employee is going back to a job from which he had formerly been promoted."

"Could this result in series of displacements to such an extent that 5 or 6 employees might have to be shifted to different work, for each employee actually laid off?" David was curious.

"Yes. We have frequently seen that happen. However, the greater emphasis now being given to qualifications has given more security to more employees. We may still have two or three employees shifted to different work for each one laid off," Frank replied.

"How much advance notice is given to the employees?"

"A minimum of 30 days, usually in a duty status."

"And do you provide severance pay?" David explored.

"Only accrued unused annual leave," Frank replied. "Furthermore, Congress is sharply restricting employees in saving up annual leave as a cushion for reduc-

tions in force. Maybe your municipal agency could give us some leadership there."

"Can lay-offs or downgradings in the federal service be appealed?" David continued his exploring.

"Yes. Any person laid off or demoted in a reduction in force who suspects there was any error in the procedure followed or in rating his qualifications for continuing positions has a right to appeal to the Civil Service Commission for a complete review of his case. If this appeal is unsuccessful he has the further right of an appeal to the Commissioners who have a second complete review made by the Board of Appeals and Review."

"Couldn't this lead to long periods of uncertainty in some cases?" David had had some prior experience with appeals.

"Yes indeed. Precise reviews of this kind take time, and delays are inevitable. However, the law guarantees war veterans these appeal rights, and the Commission believes equal opportunities for appeals should also be given to nonveterans adversely affected in reductions in force," Frank explained.

David paused noticeably in order to phrase his next question carefully. "Did anyone ever propose planning the program a little earlier and letting attrition help in this job?"

"Yes," Frank responded, "and more people are exploring the possibility than ever before. The greater emphasis we now give to qualifications for specific jobs is giving us hope that we can look forward to a program of orderly absorption of surplus employees. It would be so much better to move those that have to be moved into places where they are needed and wanted, instead of forcing them into places where they are unwelcome after 'bumping out' highly qualified lower preference employees."

"We have another plan in this direction, too," Frank continued. "To the greatest extent possible under the Veterans Preference Act, we give re-employment priority for a year to civil-service employees laid off in reductions in force, in all kinds of jobs for which they are qualified. We also maintain a special placement service for separated career employees to enable them to find new jobs on a government-wide basis. There is still room for a great deal of progress. We will be watching you as you tackle the problem, and if you can show us any desirable improvements, we will come to see if they would work in the federal jurisdiction."

"Thanks for the help, Frank." And, as he turned to leave, David added, "I'm going to try to earn that return call."

The Role of the Civil Service Assembly in Personnel Administration

—Matthias E. Lukens

ON BEHALF of all of the governmental agencies in the metropolitan area of New York, I want to welcome you to New York City and to express the hope that you will come again, and often. In representing The Port of New York Authority, I should tell you that we are pleased with the opportunity for members of our Personnel Department to participate in the work of the Civil Service Assembly and to take an active part in the regular and valuable conferences of the Assembly, such as this Eastern Regional Conference. None of us has a monopoly on ideas or methods, and certainly a forum such as this, is the place to exchange ideas and to find out what and how other persons interested in public personnel administration are doing.

Now some of you possibly have looked at the program and asked yourself: What qualifies this fellow to talk on this topic? Well, to tell the truth of the matter, our own Personnel Director initially called and asked if I would officially greet the Conference with a few brief ceremonial remarks upon its opening this morning. Because of our interest in the occasion, I readily accepted and our conversation was terminated. Several days later a member of your program committee, who shall remain unnamed, called, introduced himself and said he was so happy I had agreed to make one of the main speeches of the Conference and would I please speak on the subject which you now see on the program opposite my name. After a mild protest on my part we agreed that there had been a misunderstanding, and I agreed to make this talk after he suggested that the subject was not binding and I could feel free

to talk about almost anything of interest. And so here I am.

Now despite my protest, it should be understood that I do feel at least partially qualified to talk about the Civil Service Assembly and its work. I was closely associated with it for three years while working at the Public Administration Clearing House, or "1313" as it is known, and presently I am an officer of its sister organization, the American Society for Public Administration.

What Are CSA's Objectives?

In anticipation of my assignment this morning, I thought it would be helpful to refresh my memory regarding CSA's purposes and objectives, and so I acquired some CSA literature. Two things struck my eye: first, that the first and most important objective of the organization is "to foster interest in sound personnel administration" and second, there was a statement to the public personnel officer that reads as follows:

You and your work are important to government! Today people insist upon more public service . . . better public servants. They look to you—to all public personnel officials and their staffs—for new standards of performance, higher levels of achievement.

Having found these two key quotations, I thought it might suggest a theme for discussion. So let us talk about sound personnel administration, performance standards, and high levels of achievement.

What Is Sound Personnel Administration?

I suppose that there are about as many definitions of personnel administration as there are people who have thought about the subject. However, the definition I like best, and the one I'd like you to accept for the next twenty minutes or so, is this:

Sound public personnel administration is: first, finding good people and attracting them

• Matthias E. Lukens is First Assistant to the Executive Director of The Port of New York Authority. This article was adapted from a talk delivered at the General Session of the Eastern Regional Conference of the Civil Service Assembly held in May, 1954.

to a career in public service; second, it is giving these qualified people the equipment and training they need to do a fine job; and finally, it is providing them a climate in which they not only are able to work but one in which they are highly motivated with a desire to work well. In short, good personnel administration is a vital element in good public management, which, to quote Lawrence Appley, president of the American Management Association, "is the rendering of service to the satisfaction of those served and with a high degree of morale and sense of attainment on the part of those rendering the service."

Having found a satisfactory definition of personnel administration, let us consider some standards against which you might be able to appraise the soundness of your own personnel program and performance. Let me quickly assure you that this particular appraisal or test is unlike those that most of you have successfully passed in your public careers, the kind that many of you construct so ably. There are no official key answers. You need no appeal to the Commission to throw out a question that doesn't apply to your job. They will not even be scored unless you want to keep a mental tally of your own.

Some Questions on Selection of Personnel

I think we would all agree that the quality of the public service can be no better than the people we bring into it. So let's ask some questions about your own selection program and related subjects.¹

1. In recruiting, do you actively seek out the kind of people you want, or are you content to select from among those who present their applications?

2. Do you verify and evaluate applicants' statements adequately? Do you investigate their references?

3. Do you have a face-to-face interview with each prospective employee? If you do, does this initial interview give you what you need to appraise his qualifications? Does it also tell him everything he wants to know about the job? Does it leave him with a favorable impression of your department and his government?

4. Are your written, oral, and performance tests really the best measures you can devise for

each job, or do you cut-and-paste and borrow plausible items from your own or someone else's warmed-over efforts?

5. Do you have a promotion system which provides real career opportunities for competent employees? Do you strike a good balance between the evil of "fair haired boy" selection due to an artificially narrow promotions field and the disruptive effect of job-hopping in a wide open system? Do you resist the extreme of promoting the "best of a bad lot" in slavish devotion to the promotion-from-within principle? Can a line officer establish unreasonable qualifications that drive you into the open competitive market?

6. Do you leave your new employees pretty much on their own to "learn the ropes" or do you have a good induction program to acquaint them with their new work, new associates, and new surroundings?

Some Questions About Training Personnel

Most of us would accept the premise that even the most willing and able employee cannot do his best without job know-how. We'd probably also agree that the most economical way to give employees this know-how is through a formally organized plan for training. Let me suggest some questions to you in this and allied fields.

1. For each employee taking on a new job, do you have a definite training program tailor-made for that job?

2. Does your over-all training plan provide for continuous retraining of people on their present jobs to be sure they are using the best methods and to help them handle new and modified assignments?

3. Is your training program tied in to your promotion system so qualified employees are helped to prepare for a step up the ladder?

4. Do you capitalize on employees' interest in self-improvement by offering them off-the-job training to improve their chances for advancement? Do you tell them about off-hours adult education programs which could help them?

5. Do your trainers have the job know-how they need to be effective? Do you "train your trainers"—give them instruction in training techniques? Are their training sessions audited so they can be systematically improved?

6. Do both the personnel agency and line supervision have a mutually understood responsibility for training? Do your line supervisors "get into the act" enough to keep your training program close to the job situation as it really exists?

¹ *Business Is People! Good Personnel Administration Is Good Business; A Brief Guide to Sound Employee Relations.* (Commerce and Industry Association of New York, 99 Church Street, N. Y. C. 7, September, 1953), 9 pp., 15 cents.

Some Questions on Classification and Pay

I doubt that anything helps build morale more than the belief that salary levels compare reasonably both within the service and with outside rates. Let's look at our classification and salary plans and related matters:

1. Do you have a carefully designed plan for evaluating each position and classifying it in relation to all other positions?
2. Do you re-audit each class often enough to keep on top of changes in the content of jobs?
3. Do your class specifications give your selection people a solid basis for entrance qualifications and tests? Do they point up for trainers and line supervisors the kinds of training needed to do the job well? Are they useful to line supervisors in making work assignments and in avoiding grievances?
4. Do you have an over-all salary plan which helps you make real distinctions in salaries based on recognized differences in such factors as skill, responsibility, and working conditions? Are your grades far enough apart to avoid constant bickering over extremely narrow distinctions?
5. Do you have minimum and maximum salaries for each grade together with a program for adjusting salaries within the range on the basis of merit. And I mean merit!
6. Do your salaries, at least for the rank and file and majority of your positions, compare reasonably with prevailing rates in your area for comparable work? Do you make surveys or use other means to keep a regular check on community rates?
7. Do you regularly appraise the job performance of your employees? Do you get maximum dividends from these appraisals by telling people how they're doing?

Some Questions on Employee Benefits

A good salary policy is not the only form of compensation that can help build a happy, effective staff. Consider your benefit program:

1. Do you have a well thought-out vacation and holiday policy and schedule that compare favorably with general practice in your area?
2. Does your sick leave policy provide reasonable protection against loss of income when your people are unable to work? And do you provide some means of protection against the minority who might abuse the policy by claiming sick leave with little or no justification?

3. What about the physical well being of your employees? Do you give physical examinations to new employees before you hire them? Have you been mindful of your employees' safety and on-the-job health requirements? Do you provide first-aid facilities? Do you emphasize safety and health in your training and indoctrination programs?

4. Have you considered making group life, hospitalization, surgical or medical plans available to your employees?

5. Do you have a sound retirement program? Have you compared it lately with industrial plans in terms of cost to the employees and benefits provided? Do you look at its cost and benefits as an integral part of employee compensation and benefits?

Some Questions on Communicating with Employees

All of us like to feel important. All of us want to be recognized as valuable members of the team. Probably the most effective single way to a favorable work climate is a sound employee communications program. In this connection, ask yourself:

1. Have your employees been given a thorough understanding of how their individual jobs fit into their units, divisions, and departments?
2. Do you tell all employees whenever a change in operations is planned if that change will affect the employee's job, no matter how indirectly?
3. Do you tell your employees whenever there is a change in the Civil Service Law or Rules or some other similar decision which is important to them?
4. Do your employees feel free to air their complaints and grievances? Do you have a quick and orderly means of resolving them intelligently and fairly?
5. Do you have a suggestion system or some other way of encouraging your people to tell you their ideas for improving the service they render?
6. Have you an employee publication to inform your people of plans and policies of interest to them, to recognize their achievements, and to help them know each other better?

Some Questions About Supervision

The effectiveness of a personnel staff with the best of policies and programs, however, is still directly dependent upon the competency of line supervision. How carefully you select these supervisors, how

they are treated, their attitudes, and their skill in human relations have a profound effect not only on their approach to their own job, but inevitably upon that of each of their subordinates. In this connection let's ask these questions:

1. In selecting supervisors do you look for the special leadership qualities that a good supervisor needs, or do you stick with the discredited theory that the best worker makes the best boss?
2. Do your supervisors understand clearly their responsibilities and authority? And do they have all the authority they need to carry out their responsibilities?
3. Do the departmental personnel officer and the civil service department inject themselves between the employee and his supervisor in such a way as to impair the supervisor's effectiveness?
4. Have you made each and every line supervisor up to and including department heads aware of their most direct responsibility for maintaining a high level of morale, competence, training and performance of their employees and of assuring the best of employee relations?
5. Are you careful not to "by-pass" the supervisor by dealing directly with his subordinates, thus reducing the supervisor's importance and prestige?

Some General Questions on Personnel Policy

I have a few more questions I would like to pose that do not fit under any specific heading, but which seem to me to be important in measuring a personnel program.

1. Do you provide your employees with good lighting, good ventilation, proper tools and adequate equipment and an otherwise favorable physical environment?
2. Is there a written statement of your personnel policies and practices in the hands of all of your employees?
3. Do you have an orderly and equitable means for removing the undesirable employee—the incompetent, the goldbrick and the wrongdoer—and for effecting a reduction in force? Do you protect the employee against being railroaded? Can you, and do you, dispose of the undesirable employee promptly and effectively?
4. Do you analyze your absenteeism record and seek to correct the causes of absenteeism?
5. Do you use exit interviews or some other systematic means of finding out why people leave? Where possible, do you correct the con-

ditions that cause them to go?

6. Finally, is the staff specialist in personnel administration recognized as one of the key men on the chief executive's team?

Some Guesses on Personnel Department Scores

I know each of you could add a great many—and far more searching—questions than those I've suggested.

I promised you when I began that we would not score the test. However, I am sure of two things: None of us would have had a perfect score. There would be no single question to which some of you could not answer: "We handle that pretty well where I come from."

It would be my guess that if we checked the questions which received the largest number of favorable answers we would find such things as these at the top of the list: scrupulously impartial examinations, well-established classification plans, adequate sick leave and vacation policies, actuarially sound retirement systems.

If my guess is right that these are the high scorers, they have a remarkable common thread—they all have *quantitative* measures as an important element such as established passing scores, point evaluation of positions, days-per-month accumulation; percentage of average salary.

On the contrary, the low-score questions would probably include such things as these: measuring leadership abilities; getting honest appraisals of performance; striking a balance between the legitimate but conflicting interests of employees and department heads on fields for promotion; between employees and the good of the service in setting standards for promotion; between supervisor and staff specialist in constructing examinations and training programs.

If I am right in picking the low scorers, here too is a remarkable common element. We are inclined to avoid problems that call for *qualitative* judgment—problems that do not lend themselves readily to right-or-wrong answers arrived at by provable mathematics; problems that frequently require face-to-face evaluations; problems that especially call for the judicious weighing of the unquestioned merits of both sides and arriving at a sound deci-

sion that takes into account the conflicting points of view.

We have mastered well the science of personnel administration. We have still much to do before we can claim to be polished practitioners of the art.

Some Benefits of Self-Appraisal

I think the kind of self-appraisal we've been doing here this morning can serve several very useful purposes. It gives us a healthy appreciation of our many solid accomplishments in the field of public personnel administration. It points out there are improvements which can readily be made in the familiar things we have been doing. But more important, I think we can see that better public personnel administration does not depend solely upon drastic new legislation, or upon an all-inclusive neatly packaged "new approach."

Undoubtedly, many of us operate under laws which were meant to be, and are, effective in curbing the spoils system but which are equally effective in stunting the growth of a positive, forward-looking personnel program. Many of us are forced to follow wasteful procedures and are denied the use of valuable tools because of narrow interpretations of our laws. Some of us may serve in a climate where there is a complete lack of a sense of executive responsibility for sound personnel administration. Yet I believe that each of us—whether personnel technician, departmental personnel officer, employee organization representative, civil service commissioner or line manager—can find, without any change in his existing responsibility and authority, the means of making some genuine improvement in personnel administration within his own sphere of influence. Individually, these improvements may be small or great. In total, however, they cannot fail to add up to a significant contribution to improved personnel administration, and, in a larger sense, to better public service at lower cost.

Some Benefits of CSA Membership

This properly brings me to a consideration of the Civil Service Assembly and its relationship to personnel administration. As persons who are interested and who

work in the field of personnel administration, you are dedicated, I am sure, to sound public personnel administration and to raising the standards and bettering the performance of the personnel function in your agency or organization. In becoming a member of the Civil Service Assembly and supporting its activities you are collectively devoting your pooled efforts and experience to these same ends. Not only is the group stronger than any of its individuals, but an effective professional organization raises the general level of professional proficiency; increases the competency of individual performance; and encourages advances in the technique, skills, and methods of the profession. In every sense, the Civil Service Assembly has served you well as your professional organization and it has materially aided the progress of your profession. It is in this sense that the Civil Service Assembly has been, and can continue to be, a major force in the improvement and betterment of public personnel administration.

One further thought about the effectiveness of your professional organization. The Assembly is not the Chicago staff; it is not the Executive Council. It is the sum total of the efforts and abilities of all of its members. To be sure, the officials and staff have to provide leadership and help. But the success and effectiveness of the organization depends directly and proportionately upon your interest, your support, and your participation in its affairs. Help it to reflect your ideas, your suggestions and your experience to the end that it can better serve your profession in achieving its broad aims and goals.

In conclusion, I have found it to be a stimulating privilege to meet with you today. I will be doubly rewarded if our discussion, in turn, has stimulated the thinking of any one of you to the end that somewhere something is done a little better than it was before. The opportunity is there. Individually and collectively we can seize it and move another step toward the goal of rendering service, in the words I quoted earlier "to the satisfaction of those served and with a high degree of morale and sense of attainment on the part of those rendering the service."

Some Statistics on Mobility of Personnel People

Edwin T. Haelele

IN A RECENT article in this journal,¹ Mr. Roy G. DeMers, Jr., pointed out that data on mobility in the public personnel field do not exist. My study is, in part, an attempt to provide such data. My frame of reference is somewhat different from that suggested by Mr. DeMers in that no data are given on mobility trends or the degree to which legal requirements of residence impede mobility. I have concerned myself solely with discovering the incidence of mobility among some 528 persons in the personnel field registered with the Personnel Exchange of Public Administration Clearing House.

Composition of Group Studied

Although no claim is made that a representative sample is embraced in this

TABLE A
Composition of Group

	Number	Percentage
<i>Age</i>		
Under 25	16	3
25-40	340	64
Over 40	172	33
Total	528	100
<i>Highest Degree</i>		
Ph.D.	45	8
M.A.	220	42
B.A.	236	45
None	27	5
Total	528	100
<i>Current Salaries</i>		
Under \$4000	45	8
\$4000-\$6000	181	34
\$6000-\$8000	134	26
\$8000-\$10,000	85	16
Over \$10,000	83	16
Total	528	100

¹"Mobility of Public Personnel Technicians," *Public Personnel Review*, October, 1953.

• Edwin T. Haelele is Staff Assistant in Charge of Personnel Exchange which is operated by Public Administration Clearing House.

study, it is important to give some indication of the composition of the group. This is done in Table A on this page. All data given in this study came from the personal history records of Personnel Exchange registrants, and no attempt was made to check their accuracy.

Categories of Mobility

The statistics on mobility are presented in Table B on page 143. They are in five basic categories—(1) mobility among levels of government; (2) mobility between public and private personnel work; (3) mobility between personnel work, public or private, and other kinds of work; (4) geographic mobility; and (5) mobility among jurisdictions, disregarding the level of government and including private organizations. The total professional work history of each person was considered.

No attempt was made to analyze these data in terms of a particular salary class, a certain academic degree, or age groups. Tentative exploration of such breakdowns indicated that the results would be quite meaningless. Similarly, the keying of mobility to government levels and other correlations of that kind would yield no valid information, in my view, because of the size of the group and nature of the data. My generalizations, therefore, pertain only to these 528 cases, and should not be taken as generalizations applicable to the whole of public personnel workers.

Analysis of Data

Level of Government. The degree to which public personnel people are able to move from one level of government to another is, to my mind, a test both of the professionalization of the field of public personnel and of the degree to which each level of government has kept up with that professionalization. Of the group studied, 36% had worked at more than one level of government; 6% had worked at all

TABLE B
Incidence of Mobility Among 528
Personnel Workers

Categories	Number	Percentage
<i>Levels of Government</i>		
Only local	60	11
Only state	73	14
Only federal	179	34
Local and state	41	8
Local and federal	55	10
State and federal....	66	12
Local, state and federal	31	6
None	23	5
Total	528	100
Total local	187	35
Total state	211	40
Total federal	331	62
Only one level ..	312	59
More than one ..	193	36
<i>Personnel Work Outside of Government</i>		
145	27	
<i>Work Outside of Person- nel</i>		
229	43	
<i>Work Only in</i>		
<i>One State</i>		
201	38	
<i>Work Only in</i>		
<i>One Region^a</i>		
292	55	
<i>Different Employers Worked For</i>		
1-3	200	38
4-6	190	36
Over 6	138	26
Total	528	100

^a Including those who have worked in only one state.

three levels. It is interesting to note that there is little difference among the possible combinations—8% both local and state, 10% both local and federal, and 12% both state and federal. Please note that 5% of those included in the study have had no government experience.

Personnel Work Outside of Government. Included in this category are not only business and industrial firms, but also not-for-profit associations. Of the group studied, 27% had held personnel positions outside of government. There did not seem to be any pattern. In other words, about an equal number moved from private to public and from public to private. Quite a few cases were noted in which more than one shift was made.

Work Outside the Personnel Field. This includes both government and nongovernment work. The relatively high proportion—43%—of those who have worked in fields other than personnel raises several questions. Is it an indication of the low level of professionalization of the field? Is it an indication that personnel work is poorly paid? Is it an indication that the personnel field is in fact a part of the broader field of administration or management, and that the better personnel people move up to management posts? The data of this study cannot provide the answers to these questions. Certain facts were noted, however, which shed a little light on them. For example, quite a few who have held jobs outside the personnel field were people who were trained in social work and have held jobs in that field. Training in both fields has, of course, much in common, and it is not surprising that there is mobility between them. A similar movement was found between personnel and organization and methods work, undoubtedly for the same reason.

A considerable number did, in fact, move up into administrative posts which paid considerably more than the personnel job they held immediately prior to moving. A few went into teaching or research. A few, trained in a variety of other fields, held jobs in personnel only briefly, and returned to their own fields at the first opportunity.

Geographic Mobility. By far the most surprising statistic revealed by this study, in my view, is that 38% of those studied have worked only in one state, and that 55% have worked only in one region. I might point out that, although the District of Columbia was considered as a state, the people working there are a small part of this figure. Some of those who have worked for local, state, and the federal government have done so within the confines of a single state! A good many of the 43% also had their academic training in the same state, although only a few were born in the same state.

It is safe to say, in respect to these 528 cases, that state lines were harder to cross than regional ones.

Different Employers Worked For. This category was included to give the actual number of different jurisdictions and organizations each of the 528 had worked for. It does not indicate vertical mobility in the same jurisdiction, but it does add another dimension to the other figures. Only professional jobs were considered; service in the armed forces and short-term consulting work done on leave were both ignored. The rule of thumb used on federal jobs was to count each major department of government as a separate jurisdiction. Some common sense exceptions in both directions were made to this rule. Each city state government was counted as one jurisdiction, and internal moves between departments were not counted.

You will note that 62% of the 528 have worked for four or more jurisdictions or organizations. Of the 38% who have worked for three or less jurisdictions, only a handful have worked for just one. Similarly, not many in the "over six" category have worked for more than 9, although one person has a record of 19!

Some Comparisons

A recent study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics² gives us a chance to compare the figures presented here with figures on mobility in a highly professionalized field. A word of caution is necessary, perhaps, to point out that the samples in both cases are small and selective.

The Bureau study found that, of 146 scientists now working for government, almost 85% had at one time worked for private companies or associations. Only 27% of the personnel people in this study had ever worked for private employers. A considerable portion of this difference is undoubtedly due to the nature of the personnel sample, in that a vast majority of the registrants of the Personnel Exchange have a strong inclination toward government work. It is doubtful if the 146 scientists now working for government have this inclination. Bearing that in mind, however, it seems likely that some of the difference is due to the fact that the

scientist can more easily move from public to private employment than can the personnel worker.

In terms of geographic mobility, the Bureau study reveals that, of a total of 1122 scientists working either for government or business, less than 18% have worked only in one state. This compares with 38% in our study who have worked only in one state. This difference is significant, I think, even in view of the limitations of the samples. The scientist in private industry is never faced with the stone wall of state residence requirements when he wants to change jobs, and my personal conviction is that much of the difference noted here stems from that fact.

The figures given by the Bureau study on numbers of employers worked for can be compared with those in our study with profit. The Bureau study reports that, of 1122 scientists, 55% have worked for less than four employers, 37% for from four to seven employers, and about 8% have worked for more than six employers. The comparable figures in our study are 38%, 36%, and 26%. The age groups in both studies are comparable.

The difference between 55% and 38%, in contrast with the greater geographic mobility of the scientists, causes some speculation. Private firms with plants in several states might be responsible for part of this seeming contradiction. The difference between 8% and 26% is less easy to explain. In both cases, however, these differences might not be as great if broader studies were available. Whether or not public personnel people are changing jobs more often than scientists but within narrower geographic bounds cannot be finally determined from these studies. If they are, it would be revealing to know why they are.

In conclusion, I would like to express the hope that further studies of this kind will be made, studies which might well include fields other than public personnel itself. I would couple my hope with the admonition that such statistical studies are tools and not ends in themselves. Sophisticated statistical methods are too often squandered on naive propositions and inadequate data.

² *Occupational Mobility of Scientists*. A study of Chemists, Biologists and Physicists with Ph.D. Degrees. Bulletin 1121, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington, D. C., 1953.

- What is the thinking of experienced personnel people on everyday problems of personnel policy and practice? Their views can often provide readers of *Public Personnel Review* with cues to sound, constructive policy-making.

The editors have posed the same question to a number of experienced personnel people and have asked them to comment on the various points it raises. Here's what they say.

The Question

Do you think it is better to use minimum qualifications or desirable qualifications in the selection and promotion of personnel?

The Replies

EUGENE E. BUSH, Personnel Director, Michigan Employment Security Commission.

For many years the various merit systems throughout the United States have been divided on the question of whether minimum or desirable qualifications should be used in the selection of personnel. Excellent arguments have been advanced on both sides of the question. In the final analysis, it seems the situation must define the method.

Practically all merit systems today are dedicated to the principle of filling positions with the best qualified people available. By and large, merit systems are also almost universally dedicated to the principle of promoting qualified individuals from within where possible. Government jurisdictions, unlike private industry, are subjected to a continual scrupulous review as to methods used in selecting individuals to fill vacancies. The principle of equal treatment and fair play to all employees has been stressed for many years. In order to avoid criticism and to avoid being accused of making appointments for political or partisan reasons, it has become necessary to clearly define experience and training requirements and standards.

The classification structure in most government agencies has become a highly complex thing. Inherent in all position classification structures is the principle that positions are allocated to classes or "job families" on the basis of particular experience and training requirements which must be met before individuals are qualified to perform the class of work. These requirements are usually stated in a specification for the series or class. Theoretically, persons appointed to vacancies have been previously examined and found to be qualified. This is the principle on which registers of eligibles are founded. If this were true in actual practice, it would not be too important whether qualifications indicated on the specification were considered desirable or absolute minimums since essentially the examination would be considered the basic measure of fitness.

In actual practice, registers are often exhausted, and provisional appointments must be made. If desirable minimums are used in making such appointments it is conceivable that many persons would be appointed who, at the time of examination, would suffer because they were not granted the full amount of credit for experience inasmuch as while their experience was relatively similar to that shown on the specification it was not specifically that which was indicated. Therefore, the individual may lose several valuable points on an examination which could result in his later being certified against.

It would appear, therefore, that since government agencies must hire in accordance with a strict classification system, minimum requirements should be used in the hiring process. When minimum requirements are used, there can be no question of individual interpretation of what constitutes relatively similar experience. Under the minimum requirement system, experience and training requirements are clearly spelled out and the prospective appointee either does or does not meet them. This materially lessens future problems which frequently arise when a provisional appointee

fails to pass an examination which is later given for the position he holds, because the experience and training he offered at the time of appointment was not considered satisfactory by the examiners and, consequently, he did not receive a grade high enough to place him within certifiable range on the register for permanent appointment.

The federal government apparently recognizes this problem by requiring that all grant-in-aid agencies adhere to minimum experience and training requirements in making provisional appointments in the absence of registers. From a practical standpoint, the rules and regulations of government employment are such that the most workable method of appointing individuals is on the basis of minimum qualifications. Grant-in-aid agencies are faced with a difficult problem in making provisional appointments when the class specifications of the merit agency indicate desirable, rather than minimum, requirements. As previously stated, such agencies are required by federal standards to make provisional appointments using the desirable requirements as absolute minimums. Other agencies in the state affected by the merit system may make provisional appointments on the basis of desirable qualifications pending future examination, i.e., they may appoint persons who do not meet the specific requirements stated who may be retained if they pass the subsequent examination with a high enough rating to be certified. It is extremely embarrassing to grant-in-aid agencies to reject candidates for provisional appointment on the basis of treating desirable requirements as minimums as the result of federal standards, only to have the same candidates subsequently appear within certifiable range on eligible registers. Such candidates fail to understand why they were not provisionally appointed in the first place and irate supervisors find no rhyme or reason in this procedure. At best, it is often difficult to explain to supervisors the method and restrictions concerning appointments. The situation becomes more difficult for grant-in-aid agencies where the conflict exists concerning minimum and desirable qualifications.

From an idealistic standpoint, much can be said in favor of using desirable qualification requirements for appointment to vacancies. The minimum qualification theory imposes artificial barriers which frequently eliminate persons who appear eminently qualified for appointment. Then, too, specifications are frequently unrealistic in their limitations and examiners often reject comparable or related experience as qualifying since they must be

governed by the specific requirements indicated on the specification.

For years, private industry has followed the practice of desirable qualifications rather than minimum. In considering candidates for appointment to any position there are many intangible factors which weigh heavily in a pro or con decision by a personnel director. Such things as personality traits, general physique, neatness, ability to express oneself effectively and clearly, etc., are but a few of the many intangible factors a good personnel director must consider in evaluating an applicant. Industry has also realized that experience and training may be as varied as the applicants themselves. It has been clearly demonstrated that persons with varied backgrounds of experience and training may achieve equal success on similar positions.

Today's college curricula are such that related experience may be gained in different areas of major work. In other words, a psychology major, under one curriculum, may have had similar courses to a business administration or economics major in another curriculum since many basic courses overlap various departments at the college level. An examination of the curricula of various colleges will clearly illustrate this fact. Further, experience in an apparently unrelated area may, on closer analysis, serve as an excellent prerequisite to the position for which the applicant seeks appointment. The use of desirable, rather than minimum, qualifications is more successful in private employment where hiring restrictions are not as great as in government jurisdiction.

In summary, it is the opinion of the writer that in government employment the use of minimum qualification requirements is essential because of the many restrictions and pressures placed on government officials in making appointments. From a practical standpoint, it appears to be the only tangible way to convince employees, union representatives, supervisors, and others that appointments are made in strict accord with experience and training requirements.

In private employment, where considerable latitude is allowed hiring authorities, and where no subsequent examinations are involved to test fitness, the use of desirable qualifications, when adroitly evaluated by the personnel director, is definitely a more satisfactory method of selecting personnel.

MERLE G. FORNEY, Personnel Technician, Pennsylvania State Civil Service Commission.

Experience has shown that the most scientific and effective selection technique available

to the personnel administrator is the objective examination process. This being true, our most realistic approach in securing capable and efficient public servants would be to depend entirely upon objective, scientific examinations tailored to the positions to be filled.

For one reason or another, an artificial process has been added to our scientific method of testing. The artificial supplement of which we speak is the rating of applicants' experience and education in relation to supposedly appropriate "minimum" or "desirable" qualifications, as a condition for participation in the examination program. Technicians of many public jurisdictions point to a law or regulation which requires that qualification standards be established and use this point as a basis for a screening device of questionable value. The use of this screening device probably results from the fear that masses of totally unqualified persons will participate in the examination process and fail; thereby creating an undue waste of time, money and effort, plus unfavorable public reaction. Another possible reason is that without such a screening device veterans would have an even more decided advantage in gaining public employment than is presently the case. For example, the veteran with "marginal" experience and education may be eliminated from the examination process by screening for minimum qualifications. Without such a process, he might well block the appointment of better qualified nonveterans.

A technique which might tend to make this screening process unnecessary would be to establish a fee as a condition for participating in the examination process. I am unable to state the effect of this procedure as we have not used it in Pennsylvania; however, one can readily see that public reaction might be unfavorable and that such a fee might or might not be effective as a screening device.

Assuming that the practice of rating experience and education as a screening device is one which will be with us for some time to come, let's take a look at the question of whether or not the rating should be based upon "minimum" or "desirable" standards. This question is one that warrants serious consideration, and like so many other phases of personnel work is subject to individual judgment and interpretation. The terms, "minimum" and "desirable" are no exception in the matter of interpretation.

For the purposes of this discussion and as a basis for mutual understanding, I shall offer my definition of the terms involved. "Minimum qualifications" are those written stand-

ards of experience and/or education which are required of applicants for examination and employment in a specific class of positions, indicating that persons meeting the standards are theoretically capable of performing or being trained to perform the duties involved after a reasonable period of orientation.

"Desirable qualifications," by my interpretation, carry the connotation of describing the "ideal" new employee. Such statements of standards are oftentimes less rigid and are characterized by terms such as "desirable training," "preferably a college graduate," etc.

If we are then to agree that the primary purpose of such standards is to serve as a screening device to "weed out" those persons who are obviously unfit, I believe that "minimum" qualifications are best able to perform that task. Major criticism of minimum qualifications seems to stem from the fact that we rarely see class specifications containing true minimums. The reasons for this situation are quite obvious to the classification technician when he considers the optimism and prejudices of supervisors, the technicians' demand for internal consistency of classification plans, and the general reluctance to break away from past practices.

Personnel technicians can do much to eliminate the criticism that desirable qualifications are represented as minimums. The way in which we can accomplish this objective is to perform our job analysis functions with more care and in greater detail. It is sometimes our task to educate supervisors who are overly impressed with the importance of the positions under their supervision, and to convince them that establishment of "minimum" rather than "desirable" standards will not result in the selection of incapable employees, providing the examination process is valid. We also need to stress the advantages in having new blood flow into existing organizations. If through this process, we are able to create true minimums, another huge task still confronts us. That task is to periodically and consistently review existing qualifications so that they reflect needs in relation to existing labor market conditions, program changes, job re-engineering, etc.

In Pennsylvania, we have recently faced a problem in which the "minimum" qualifications for a specific class were considered to be too restrictive, in that recruitment difficulties were experienced. I shall attempt to clearly describe the problem, our solution, and the results.

In 1953, the Pennsylvania State Civil Service Commission and the Department of Public As-

sistance launched a joint study and experiment pertaining to Visitor positions (Welfare Case Workers). Applicants for employment in the Visitor class had fallen sharply from 4,371 applicants in 1950 to 904 applicants in 1952.

The minimum qualifications required that applicants have three (3) years of college or three (3) years of employment in fields, which because of their technical or professional nature, are populated largely by college graduates. A serious question arose as to whether these qualifications were not "desirable," rather than "minimum."

Agreement was reached that an experimental examination be given on the basis of "broadened" qualifications. The test area covered twenty-six of sixty-seven counties, with records of high turnover and/or exhausted lists. The examination process was to be based on the written test only, with no provision for oral interviews or ratings of experience and education.

An extensive recruitment campaign was conducted in the twenty-six-county area. Two hundred and eighty-nine persons participated in the written examination. Of this group, ninety-six possessed qualifications which would have admitted them under the higher standards. Twenty-one of the ninety-six persons failed, or 22%. One hundred and ninety-three persons participated on the basis of the broadened or lowered qualifications. Of this group, one hundred and thirty-three passed, and sixty, or 31%, failed. All persons participating in this program took the same examination questions.

The study which followed revealed that those persons possessing the higher qualifications scored higher on the written test as a group, and that a lower percentage failed. However, use of the lower qualifications did secure an additional supply of qualified candidates. In fact, the successful candidates were interviewed and rated on a specially designed scale by the County Boards of Assistance. The Boards reported no real difference between the candidates having different qualifications. Of the twenty-six County Boards, only one reported dissatisfaction.

A similar study is presently being conducted on a more recent program. This examination was given state-wide, and participation was again determined on the basis of the lower qualifications. Although the findings are incomplete, we are eagerly awaiting the results to learn if our experiences in the first program are to be repeated.

In conclusion, so long as standards of experience and education are considered neces-

sary as a screening device, I believe that true "minimums" are better able to accomplish the objectives than are "desirable" qualifications. Statements of minimum standards are more easily evaluated by virtue of their definiteness than are standards containing terms such as "preferable," "desirable," etc.

CHARLES B. MACKLIN, Director of Test Construction, Chicago Civil Service Commission.

There is a distinction between what will be called in these comments functional qualifications and what will be called formal qualifications. Formal qualifications are illustrated by possession of college degrees, achievements in professional organizations, or "... years of progressive and successful experience of a level of difficulty comparable to that of the next lower grade. . . ." Functional qualifications are illustrated by ability to take dictation or solve engineering problems. Stated more abstractly, functional qualifications are those which generally may be subjected to a competitive measurement process and are closely related to important job components. Formal qualifications are those, the existence or effect of which it is generally difficult to infer from an anonymous measurement process; they are considered to have a predictive importance for job performance nevertheless, and may be learned from a personal-vocational history.

The majority of this comment will refer to the question as it applies to use of formal qualifications. I believe that there is considerable agreement about best policy concerning functional qualifications.

Referring to formal qualifications, therefore, a program of "desirable" seems preferable to one of "minimum" in many—probably the majority—of circumstances. In other circumstances there may be some advantages to the use of minimum qualifications.

Selection and promotion processes are considered by many capable and conscientious personnel administrators to be serious efforts in long-range prediction of job success. And in many organizations it is highly desirable that practical conclusions be reached on this matter so early that they may be reflected in the nature of the eligible list. There is a somewhat different position to the effect that minimum predictive accuracy is inherently difficult if not impossible to achieve prior to the eligible list stage and that resources should be concentrated upon gaining important selective knowledge and decisions from the probationary period.

Clearly, however, there are distinct difficulties with using the probationary period to select

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only the most fit for any given position. This goal must, it would seem, be sought at the earlier stage whether attainable or not.

Under these circumstances the minimum formal qualification requirement of a certain amount of experience is often largely an effort to gain the benefits of a probationary period served with a previous employer. This approach, which is basically rather ingenious, faces definite limits.

One of the greater of these limitations is that the minimum formal qualifications, in practice, often are made excessive. Whether this develops from desires to support the prestige of a position, or that of an agency, or to restrict competition, or to limit applications to a number for which a good quality examination may be given—for whatever reasons, there seems to be a common tendency to overestimate the ideally necessary or desirable. Even extravagant and grandiose requirements are, unfortunately, fairly familiar.

Use of minimum qualifications in this way does increase probabilities that those selected will perform satisfactorily. This is not a sufficient selection objective. That objective must be sufficiently broad to include also the specific goal of making available for placement *all* applicants likely to perform well, whether or not these came blessed with an abundance of formal—or apparent—qualifications. Yet biographical literature and everyday experience contain abundant accounts of individuals whose achievements are particularly notable because they were made despite lack of what we would call formal qualifications. A share of such persons have been, and should always be, in the public service.

One of the unquestionably weighty considerations tending to favor minimum qualifications is that they can reduce examination costs by a prompt elimination of the unfit. The merit ideal, however, implies that this sort of economy is justified only when all those excluded from competition are certainly unqualified. This matter is generally not certain when decision is rested exclusively upon formal qualifications, however. Here ideal practice indicates that final judgments affecting the interests of both candidates and the public service shall be held in abeyance pending further efforts to measure relative qualifications.

As a practical matter it may be unavoidable to limit the costs of selection processes at various times, and depending upon the nature of the position, the elimination of all but those with certain minimum qualifications may be the method which will give greatest predictive certainty for a limited investment in selection.

From another point of view, there may be some times and particular positions for which certain traits are indispensable, very difficult to ascertain directly through any available measurement process, and about which the most certain evidence is that of a formal nature. These instances occur relatively infrequently, but then minimum qualifications are probably justified.

Perhaps it is mostly a semantic difference, but it does seem that most of the practical benefits of publishing and using minimum qualifications may generally be attained without the necessity of expressing the concept. If it appears in selecting for a given position exceedingly probable that a certain formal qualification possessed to a certain minimum degree is indispensable to job success, then persons lacking that indispensable qualification may be assigned a score which will tend to make it proportionately probable that they will not be selected for the position. In a word, it seems to me that since the personnel administrator deals with probabilities rather than with certainties as the data of selection for conclusions, he should be satisfied with probabilities rather than seek magically to convert them to certainties.

Now I will refer briefly to functional qualifications—directly measurable abilities constituting important components of the position. For the majority of positions there does not seem to be much point in using minimum qualifications unless they may be easily amended, or unless they are so low as to fail to eliminate poorly fitted candidates. Size and quality of candidate populations often change rather rapidly. One would seem better prepared to meet these changes if he took the consistent position that there is a range of acceptable fitness, but that persons toward the lower end of the range would be accepted only when the position could not be filled with better fitted persons. For some positions, also, there may be some useful minimum qualifications. Probably there should not be truck driver appointments unless the appointees possess minimum vision. This sort of a minimum qualification may serve, perhaps, as a useful reminder or guide for the personnel administrator. Yet even in the presence of this sort of qualification, there may be good grounds for a decision different from that which might be inferred from the statement of any rigid and distinctive minimum qualifications. Circumstances, local in time and place, and the practical possibilities may properly be influential toward decisions among such alternatives as these: hold the position vacant a while, adjust

pay rates, recruit further, reduce qualifications, reorganize the work so as to abolish old and create new positions, and the like.

In summary, it may be said that achievement of the appropriate goals of selection and promotion is often heavily dependent upon considerable flexibility of action, that this flexibility is better preserved through desirable rather than through minimum qualifications.

It probably goes without saying that in many places those methods which are ideally best may somewhat exceed what is practically possible. The latter may be limited by law, available funds, or other similar factors. Purposes, not limitations, however, must be kept as the most influential guides to our efforts.

ROY A. PALM, Secretary, Civil Service Commission, Seattle, Washington.

The answer to this question will depend on the nature of the position to be filled. If the position is highly specialized with very definite qualifications required for good performance on the job, the answer is easy. Set up minimum entrance requirements and if the applicants can meet these, the examining problem is minimized in that we need only administer a few tests of personality or mental capacity to provide a basis for ranking the eligibles. This would apply particularly to professions in which a license or registration is required. Pharmacists, nurses, bacteriologists, etc. would fall in this class. The licensing or registration requirements for these positions call for a very definite amount and kind of training and education, and if the applicant has not this preparation he could not and would not be permitted to work in that field. Any who do meet these requirements should be able to perform satisfactorily on the job. Also, if you are fortunate enough to operate under the "rule of three" your appointing officer has his choice of the top three eligibles and can take into consideration factors which we cannot measure satisfactorily by any practical methods in use at the present time.

In recruiting for the more generalized types of positions such as administrative assistant, "minimum requirements" would have to be so liberal that they would be useless for screening purposes. A person in a position of this type is frequently the business manager for an office, where the head of the department is a highly-trained specialist, such as a director of a health program. The administrative assistant in this case becomes a "jack of all trades" who must assume responsibility for all general business of the department that does not fall directly in the specialty of a health program.

The variety and nature of the problems he must meet cannot be anticipated except in a very general manner. Therefore any attempt to set up minimum requirements which would bar an applicant because he lacked certain qualifications without giving consideration to other qualities or experience which he might possess might deprive the agency of the possible services of a very desirable individual. It is far better then to be in a position to credit any good experience or education that may be set forth by the candidate on his own behalf.

It is true that this procedure would permit greater numbers to apply and consequently more examinations to score but this same factor would also increase the chances of securing many additional well-qualified eligibles who might have been ruled out by rigid minimum requirements.

Highly restrictive entrance qualifications have their proper place but only in comparatively few classes. They must be applied with extreme caution or the agency will be accused of applying arbitrary procedures and formulas which would not be used or tolerated if the needs of the position were given realistic practical consideration. We should at all times place the needs of the operating departments first and see that they are given as much selection as is possible under the rules under which we operate. If we operate under the "rule of three," we should try to have a full certification of three names from which the appointing officer may make his selection.

EDWARD J. REEVERTS, Personnel Staff Officer, Tennessee Valley Authority.

Minimum and desirable qualification requirements are both needed in the selection of personnel. However, there are certain standards which must be adhered to in the use of qualification requirements.

Minimum qualification requirements should be established on the basis of knowledges, skills, and abilities required to do the work successfully. Attention should be given to all the major job elements, or characteristics, that have an important bearing on job success. These necessary qualifications do not vary with changes in the labor market.

Statements of essential qualification requirements in terms of knowledges, skills, and abilities are, however, of little value unless we have evidence that a person possesses these qualifications. Evidences, such as training, experience, or test scores, are not as clear-cut as the knowledges, skills, and abilities and are more difficult to evaluate. For example, we can determine fairly accurately that a clerical job

requires a knowledge of certain procedures and methods and certain abilities. On the other hand, it would be difficult, and in many cases unreliable, to set up a specific amount and type of experience which would separate the qualified and the unqualified. Mere amounts of experience or training are not an adequate index of a person's qualifications, and care must be taken that they are not applied arbitrarily. On experience, for example, it is necessary to take into account the different types; its recency; how progressive it is; the type of firm or organization in which it is acquired; and its quality.

Minimum qualification requirements which set more or less arbitrary minimum amounts of experience do not take these factors sufficiently into account. Suppose that a two-year experience requirement is set up for a Design Engineer position. An applicant having less than the two years of required engineering experience may have greater knowledge, skills, and abilities for the job than others who have the two years or more of experience because of the quality and type of experience gained. To a certain extent this also applies to the other evidences, such as training and test scores. It is difficult to validate evidences and, if rigid requirements are used, well-qualified candidates might be eliminated. It is also difficult to justify rigid minimum requirements to unsuccessful candidates, particularly if they have performed the same type of work successfully elsewhere or in other ways have demonstrated their ability. It is important to be able to justify minimum requirements to employees. Many of them are well acquainted with the jobs for which selections are made and are in a position to know what is required to do the work in the job to be filled. Although rigid qualification requirements tend to save staff time and administrative costs, they do not always result in the best selections.

A common objection to the use of minimum qualification requirements is that they do not allow enough flexibility in a period of manpower shortage. However, qualification standards should not be lowered during man power shortages. If it is necessary to lower the qualification requirements for selection, devices, such as qualifying training programs, should be used to train persons for the work.

In the Tennessee Valley Authority the term "Evidence of Possession of Essential Qualifications" is used. These evidences are made a part of the class specifications. They are developed in cooperation with management and employee organizations. In selection of employees, the evidences are considered with the knowl-

edges, skills, and abilities which are required to do the work successfully. Approximate amounts of time are indicated which represent the most typical length of experience required for success on the job. However, in the process of selection, these amounts of experience, as stated in the class specifications, are used only as guides for finding the persons who possess the essential knowledges, skills, and abilities. All the available evidences are considered, including type and quality as well as amount.

The Tennessee Valley Authority uses desirable qualifications in addition to essential qualifications in some instances. In selecting a person for a certain type of position, it may be desirable to select one who possesses qualifications in addition to those essential for job success in the immediate job to be filled. Desirable qualifications may include evidence of potential abilities, which are essential to promotion to higher grade jobs. They may also include such evidence as completion of a specific formal training program or postgraduate study of a specific type. Desirable qualifications probably attract higher caliber candidates and may result in a higher quality of employees, especially if present employees also train themselves to be better qualified. However, if they are used alone, it is difficult to distinguish between qualified and unqualified. Such lines must be drawn to carry out certain policies, such as veterans' preference.

Qualification requirements for successful job performance must be examined periodically to assure they serve as an effective aid in selecting competent employees, and they are definitely related to job success. This relationship should be studied, using statistical methods when they can be used effectively. In addition, the judgment of supervisors and employees should also be taken into account. It will result in more realistic and understandable standards than if developed entirely by personnel technicians. In my opinion, joint development of qualification standards by management and employee organizations helps in getting better and more satisfied employees on the job.

MARJORIE M. TAYLOR, Chief, Position Classification Section, Office of Regional Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service, U. S. Treasury Department, Chicago, Illinois.

In considering this question, I am reminded of the words of the Swiss philosopher and critic, Henri-Frederic Amiel, who said, "Doing easily what others find difficult is talent; doing what is impossible for talent is genius."

Hence, I see no one right answer to the question as to the desirability of using "mini-

num" qualifications or "desirable" qualifications in the selection and promotion of personnel. However, it seems inevitable that the "purpose" of the selection or promotion be determined first. For some categories of positions aimed at selecting young and well-grounded persons for advancement, the goal should be high qualification requirements of a general nature. On the other hand, if an employer wants a person with particular qualifications to fit a characteristic position, then the recruiting and/or selection must be precise. It is believed that if a characteristic is essential to the full performance of a position as a qualification requirement, then it is essential that it be included in stating the qualification requirements. If the characteristic is susceptible of identification, then it is susceptible of definition. Therefore, the written qualifications would be incomplete without it.

It is also to be recognized that the qualification requirements are always a part of the basic position classification definition and should coincide with the qualification requirements of incumbents selected to fill such position. If it is impossible to recruit or select a person possessing these qualification requirements, as well as the position classification requirements, then it appears most desirable to establish a trainee-level position for these categories. This would afford opportunities to the persons so selected to acquire these qualification requirements and attain full performance of the positions in question. In such instances, it would be necessary to formulate qualification standards that are extremely high which might require the application of maximum qualifications plus desirable qualifications in the selection and/or promotion.

In all of these qualification requirements, especially when considering those which are most desirable for promotion, it is necessary that we take into consideration performance on the position currently occupied by the employee, his experience (for which there is no substitute), his educational background, and potential capacities for growth. These factors should be implemented by demonstrated ability to deal effectively with others and personal traits. These traits should include: Ordinary politeness; respect for the dignity of others; ability to comprehend the personal problems and viewpoints of others; a good measure of maturity; excellent vision and foresight pertaining to factors which motivate personal actions; ability to conform to changing situations or viewpoints established or expressed by others; honesty and straightforwardness in all contacts with others; ability to make confident

evaluations of facts and opinions presented in a decisive manner; willingness to admit erroneous decisions gracefully, etc. These qualities could be grouped in some concise manner and undoubtedly would have to be evaluated through the means of group oral interviews or other means of direct contact with the applicant, but could provide more realistic bases for selection or promotion of persons for positions within any organization. In any event, whether minimum qualifications or desirable qualifications or parts of both are used in the processes of selection and promotion of persons, very definite and realistic yardsticks or guides should be established reflecting qualification requirements actually required by the position to be filled, supported by realistic and attainable performance standards.

Great emphasis has been placed in recent years upon effective use of the knowledges, abilities, and skills of employees to the greatest degree compatible with efficiency and economy. In view of this emphasis, it seems incumbent upon us all to take a more precise look at what is actually required of a person selected or promoted to accomplish full performance of the position to be filled. There are certain categories of positions where the conditions of employment are such that the employer should definitely seek employees with very low qualification requirements. This is particularly true if the employer has huge volumes of simple, repetitive, routine work to be carried out. Emphasis should be placed on such factors as dexterity, mentality and temperament, keyed to the employment conditions involved. Persons whose education, cultural level, and aspirations are incompatible with these employment conditions should be rejected. When employment conditions are undesirable to the person selected, the inevitable results are resignations, nonproductive performance, or other undesirable conditions.

Experience has taught us that there has been a lack of correlation of the position requirements with qualification requirements. There has been a definite tendency to raise or lower the qualification requirements to meet the ever fluctuating labor market, whereas it has been impossible (possibly due to the lack of flexibility in position requirements to meet the fluctuating labor market) to simultaneously adjust position requirements. It seems, therefore, that a desirable solution to these problems would be the combination of position and qualification requirements for as many categories of positions as possible into a single set of realistic standards, supported by precise performance standards.

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Employee Participation in Management: An Annotated Bibliography

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The application of the labor-management committee system in the federal government as one means of increasing efficiency and improving work methods.

Schnoor, Howard.

Employee participation in management in the German civil service. *Personnel administration*, vol. 15, no. 5, September 1952, pp. 11-18, 22.

Presents historical development of employee participation in Germany, and comparison of government shop councils in Germany with employee participation devices in the United States civil service.

Shultz, George P.

Worker participation on production problems; a discussion of experience with the "Scanlon plan." *Personnel*, vol. 28, no. 3, November 1951, pp. 201-211.

Case histories of worker participation plans in operation, ways to make them work, and factors which hinder their operations.

U.S. Department of the air force.

Building a cooperative and productive work force through civilian advisory councils. Washington, 1952. 4 pp. (Program supplement no. 9, AFM 40-1.)

How to organize, administer, and utilize the services of the civilian employee advisory groups.

U.S. Federal personnel council.

Guide for employee participation in agency management in the federal service. Washington, 1952. 17 pp.

Presents two plans for employee participation, one through direct participation of all employees, the other through elected representatives.

Includes plans now in operation at Library of Congress, Federal communications commission, Forest service, Tennessee valley authority, and the Navy department.

Vanaman, A. W.

Democratic management. *Personnel administration*, vol. 9, no. 6, July 1947, pp. 10-13.

Describes the consultative management technique at the Sacramento air materiel area, and the organization and operations of its Civilian advisory staff.

Watts, Lyle F.

Employee participation in the Forest service. *Personnel administration*, vol. 15, no. 4, July 1952, pp. 6-10.

A favorable atmosphere, with a positive and friendly attitude on the part of management, is considered essential in the development of an effective system of employee participation. Describes the organization and functions of the Clerical and Junior staff committees which study current management problems and make recommendations from the employee's point of view.

Webb, James E.

Main factors in administrative morale. *Personnel administration*, vol. 9, no. 4, March 1947, pp. 3-6.

One of major functions of management is to devise methods of developing and maintaining a real sense of participation and a high morale among public employees. Suggests various means of reenforcing the employee's sense of "belonging."

Williams, Elmer V. and May A. Spelbring.

A personnel relations committee in action. Public personnel review, vol. 11, no. 3, July 1950, pp. 126-129.

Effective employee relations program of the California state personnel board consisting of a representative employee committee "to serve as a clearing-house for the submission and consideration of the personnel needs of the employees . . . and to recommend ways of meeting these needs."



Book and Pamphlet Reviews

Selection for Industrial Leadership. A. G. Arbous. Oxford University Press, New York, 1953. 180 pages. \$4.80.

There are few definitive studies in any science. Knowledge in any field seems to build up in erratic patterns until one day someone gathers together the results and a solid structure becomes visible. Often, by the very nature of the situation, the person gathering is not the person who has produced extensively because of the concentration necessary for first-class production. This book by Dr. Arbous makes a contribution to knowledge. It can surely be said that it is not a definitive work, but the one who builds the first whole structure in administrative selection will probably include this contribution.

There are a number of approaches for those desiring to contribute significantly to selection methods and they break down into the conventional rubrics of: (a) greater insight into the nature of the job; (b) greater insight into the qualities to be measured; (c) ingenuity in obtaining or devising criteria data; (d) insight, creativeness, or ingenuity in the use, adaptation, construction, or interpretation of the results of selection methods; (e) establishing relationships which have eluded others; and (f) the obtaining of data for important selection methods or new occupational groups. Based on the above categories, Dr. Arbous' book is significant in providing badly needed data for the validity of the clinical interview, the group oral performance test, essay test, and the abstract reasoning (figure analysis) test, and in providing a good discussion of the relation of validity coefficients to such matters as establishing cut-off scores, selection ratio, management objectives, and the use of successive hurdles to achieve economy.

Dr. Arbous' validity data are based on 123 employees of a South African company which is not identified. The criterion, using combined

graphic rating and rank-order methods, was the *prediction* by supervisors of administrative ability based on one year of observation of employees in nonadministrative work. Dr. Arbous says the administrative jobs he was predicting were ill-defined, and goes no further in this important area. His listing of the qualifications he sought to measure seems unduly influenced by the job analysis of British Government administrative jobs without any stated attempt to determine whether the information from this source was relevant. Considering the difference in function, size, and environment of the British Government and a South African company, it is likely that the differences in type between the qualifications were as great as the similarities, and differences in degree probably pervaded most of those qualifications which were similar.

The selection methods for which validity data are given and the data for them are: (1) adaptation of the Otis intelligence test (65 items) $r = .53$; (2) abstract reasoning (38 items) $r = .43$; (3) arithmetic problems (62 items) $r = .33$; (4) Gottschaldt Figures (45 items) $r = .28$; (5) group oral performance test (leaderless and designated leader) $r = .60$; (6) essay test, $r = .53$, and (7) clinical interview, $r = .54$. An interesting test on interviewing skill was omitted from the analysis because of the lack of reliability in the ratings on this test. The final recommended battery consists of the Otis and the abstract reasoning tests, the essay, and the group oral. The clinical interview was omitted from the final battery, despite its high validity, because its intercorrelation with the group oral was .66 (its intercorrelation with the Otis was .55). The multiple correlation for the battery is .68.

The data for the essay, group oral, and the clinical interview, are very valuable. While the group oral is being extensively used throughout the world, only limited validity data have

been available for it. It has previously been primarily accepted because of the logic of its assumptions and its face validity. The essay and clinical interview have been rejected by psychometrists for a number of reasons; the results of this study may encourage further research.

One of the greatest insights of Dr. Arbous was his recognition that the data obtained for subjective devices in a validation study might not be duplicated in actual use because of the greater control of conditions in such a study. He, therefore, recommended that two objective tests, the Otis and abstract reasoning, be used even though, if he had followed his data literally, the omission of the abstract reasoning test, because of its high intercorrelation with the Otis, would not have significantly decreased the multiple correlation he obtained. This recognition, which has eluded others, is worthy of high praise as is his detailed discussion of the importance of careful establishment of cut-off scores.

In summary, this is a worthy addition to the few sets of validity data available in this important field.—MILTON M. MANDELL, *Chief, Administrative and Management Testing, U. S. Civil Service Commission.*

Employment Psychology: The Interview. Roger M. Bellows and M. Frances Estep. Rinehart & Company, Inc., New York, 1954. 295 pp. \$4.25.

Employment Psychology: The Interview is a comprehensive, concise, and well written book. It is well suited as a reference book for beginning interviewers, personnel workers, and management levels not familiar with the subject. It is nontechnical, objective, readable and goes straight to the heart of the problems considered. The authors have recognized the subjective pitfalls in interviewing and have attempted to make suggestions for increasing the objectivity of the selective process. Although the book is nontechnical in the usually accepted use of the term, it does not omit technical factors which are essential to clarity.

"At the present time the interview lacks reliability, validity and utility." This statement could be discouraging to those who are interested in the selection process, but the authors use it as a starting point for pointing out the necessity for improvement and attempt to show the way to further research in the field. Individual differences, a much used, but probably widely abused expression, is a fundamental concept in the thinking of the authors. The authors' concept of the interview is not

limited to the face-to-face observations and impressions of the interviewer. It is broadened to include related sources of material, such as the application blank, work history, family history, and other personal data. The "action" interview of itself is described as too subjective, too dependent upon the type of theory of personality, too liable to the "halo" effect.

The importance of job analysis, methods of making the analysis, and uses that may be made by management of job information are treated in one chapter. The discussion of the application blank is supplemented by lists and forms used by several companies.

A chapter on "The Interviewing Process" deals specifically and realistically with such matters as training interviewers, establishing and maintaining rapport, recording information, and using the pause. Especial emphasis is placed on the importance of properly closing the interview.

Analysis of the role of personal data, according to the authors, has proved to be very helpful in determining success and lowering turnover in some business concerns. This is cited as particularly effective in insurance companies.

The authors consider trade tests under the headings of performance trade tests, written trade tests, picture trade tests, and oral trade tests. Trade tests are defined by the authors as measures of specific knowledge; aptitude tests are defined as measures of potentiality for learning. The above types of tests are evaluated on the basis of economy and utility.

"Who makes the decision to hire" is discussed from the standpoint of top management and lower levels of authority. Use of the template-folder applied to applications is discussed as an alternative to separate application blanks for each job or position. The multiple cut-off method using successive hurdles is given consideration as well as the multiple correlation approach.

The problem of turnover is recognized by the authors with emphasis on costs and analysis of reasons for turnover. Efforts at predicting turnover are cited and suggestions made for reducing it are discussed.

A chapter is devoted to new approaches to the interview. The stress interview, the group interview and board interview are considered, but no conclusions are attempted. Further research in these fields is suggested as being needed.

The book contains some outstanding features which deserve mention:

1. Frequent use of tables and figures serves to clarify concepts and stimulate interest.
2. They draw extensively from the actual ex-

periences of industry and business for illustrative purposes.

3. A comprehensive bibliography is included with each chapter.

4. Each chapter concludes with a concise and effective summary.—CHARLES S. GARDINER, Director, *Texas Merit System Council*.

The Techniques of Supervision. Alfred R. Lateiner. National Foreman's Institute, Inc., New London, Connecticut, 1954. \$4.00.

Although there has accumulated an especially extensive literature on the subject of supervision, there has been, as the author points out, a dearth of reading material for the first-line supervisor. Mr. Lateiner has come forth with a book in simple, readable style addressed directly to this "shirt sleeve" supervisor.

Appropriately, the book deals first with "human relations" aspects of the supervisor's job, approximately the first third of the book being devoted to understanding and dealing with people, ways of winning cooperation, and ways of improving morale. After pointing out that people differ in the way they think, feel, and act, attention is turned to four major similarities—the group instinct, resistance to change, ego-hunger, and desire for security. Of the five factors which make for security, i.e. food, protection, companionship, comfort, and approval, the latter is pointed out as a factor which can be utilized to great advantage by the supervisor in handling problem employees. Consistent attention to, and allowances for, the ways in which employees differ and the ways in which they are alike will help the supervisor play his key role in building a healthy company climate. Techniques for conducting conferences on an informal and a formal basis are then described and suggested as a further aid to development of a healthy working climate.

In introducing the subject of cooperation, the barriers of fear, jealousy, antagonism, and misunderstanding are explored. Eight ways to win cooperation are presented with useful pointers and well chosen examples common to both shop and office work.

Morale is defined as the climate or atmosphere—something always present. It involves a group spirit, a feeling of good will among employees working together toward a common goal. A company can have good working conditions such as its pay, pension, and vacation plans—all factors affecting morale and yet have constant absenteeism, tardiness, labor turnover, poor production and other troubles which are indications of poor morale. Basic factors af-

fecting morale in terms of employee attitudes and feelings are listed and five ways for a supervisor to improve morale are discussed and summarized in check-list form.

The subjects of discipline and accident control follow, and the order is good inasmuch as controlling employee performance in relation to safety is in reality a problem of discipline. Discipline is not to be thought of in terms of penalties and punishment, which is only one aspect, and should enter the picture only when constructive approaches have failed. Discipline is a force that develops within the worker himself which causes him to conform on a voluntary basis to rules, regulations, and high standards of work and behavior. Obedience through fear is not effective discipline. A condition of proper discipline exists when employees come to work regularly and on time, handle materials and operate equipment carefully, turn out a satisfactory quantity and quality of work, and do their work in good spirits. This involves establishment of good habits through leadership and good supervisory climate. Ways of encouraging good habits and ways of breaking bad habits are suggested and followed by a discussion of the problems of lateness and absenteeism.

The emphasis on accident control as a supervisory responsibility is consistent with the newer thinking in the field of safety. In the case of an accident due to an unsafe act or even an unsafe condition resulting from a human failure, the supervisor must take responsibility. The employee doesn't care, doesn't know, or is not able to work safely. The chain of events is *background* (inexperience, home conditions, personal habits) → *personal defects* (not caring, not knowing how, physical defect) → *unsafe acts or conditions* → *accidents* → *injury*. The supervisor is in the best position to eliminate the unsafe acts. Categories of unsafe acts are listed, as are steps to be taken when a worker is found committing an unsafe act. Also categories of unsafe conditions as listed by the American Standards Association are given, together with what to do about them. Typical parts of an accident report are specified with the admonition to the supervisor to submit a complete report for each injury, even minor ones. Lifting and carrying rules are given.

The chapter on how to train employees contains a history of job training beginning with World War I and extending through the T.W.I. program known as Job Instructor Training (J.I.T.) to the present instructor training with the 4-Steps of (1) approaching the employee, (2) demonstration by the super-

visor, (3) performance by the learner and (4) reviewing the learner's progress. Approaching the experienced employee is treated as a special problem.

How to simplify work methods is stressed as a supervisory responsibility and the approach described is differentiated from "speed up" drives and "efficiency engineering." A five-step plan is presented which includes breaking down the job and questioning the details of the job as well as the job itself which is characteristic of most methods improvement programs. Good material is included about taking into account the human factors involving the worker in analyzing the process and arriving at the improvement; selling the boss on what the new method is, what it will cost and what it will save; reassuring the worker that it will not eliminate his job but make the work easier, safer, etc.

The chapter on how to solve a problem is reminiscent of the old 4-step method of the job-relations program of T.W.I. Some very good pointers are given under each step and good advice is given about consulting with others and especially one's own superior before taking action and also about the importance of timing actions properly.

The chapter on the supervisor as a manager appears to be something of a catch-all in that it covers balancing loyalty and responsibility to workers against responsibility to management, relations with other supervisors, the development of understudies, planning work, giving orders, personnel duties, and public relations.

The final chapter consists of a check list of fifty questions based on the content of the book, answerable by "yes" or "no," which are to be used as a self-appraisal test. It is followed by key answers for use in scoring and an explanation of the reason for each answer. Norms based on the answers of several thousand first-line supervisors are given for interpretation of scores.

The coverage of the book is comprehensive and the content is consistent with current authorities and the findings of research studies in the area of supervision and productivity.

Almost too much is crowded into the small span of 200 pages and at times one feels that material is forced under subject headings in order to get it in. A lengthening of the book and some reorganization of material might be desirable—also the inclusion of more content on orienting the new worker, the personnel duties of the supervisor, and the supervisor's part in improving public relations.

The book is well suited for use in govern-

ment and might well form the basis for supervisory training programs within smaller agencies which lack staff for the development of special materials for the agency's particular needs or for a more unstructured approach to this area of training.

Ideally, the book would be used in conjunction with training sessions which provide for discussion, supplementation of content, and skills practice of group members.

To facilitate its distribution to first-line supervisors the book is being published in a low-cost, \$2.00, paper-bound edition as well as in the cloth bound edition.—MARGARET MARSHALL, *Chief, Employee Development Division, Los Angeles County Civil Service Commission.*

Effective Use of Older Workers. Elizabeth Llewellyn Breckinridge. Wilcox and Follett, Chicago, 1953. 224 pp. \$4.00.

Scientific and industrialized America is increasingly faced with the problem of an ever-growing older age group. There are many recent books designed to advise and aid the person who has retired, and throughout the nation there are many permanent committees and organizations studying the problems of the aging and aged. But all long-term planning requires facts upon which to base recommendations and actions and Miss Breckinridge, the Executive Secretary of the Illinois Committee on Aging, has produced them in this book.

The Committee on Human Development of the University of Chicago, facilitated by funds from the Rockefeller Foundation, conducted an "exploration of the ways in which companies were using older workers effectively and also of the procedures being devised to facilitate workers' retirement and subsequent adjustment in the post-retirement period." An interview-type of survey was conducted among 221 companies throughout the United States, and 90 of these—mostly manufacturers—were selected for this report because of their unusual and generally flexible programs or procedures for dealing with the older worker.

Although the book is based upon a survey it is not a dull report, but rather, a readable discussion of the findings. Essentially, it is examples of experiences regarding the hiring, placement, and retention of older workers; the operation of flexible retirement systems; individual and group counseling procedures; and techniques used in preparation for retirement. But it likewise shows that the blanket stigma of old age is unjustified, for there are many jobs that the older person can handle as effectively

as his junior. Absenteeism, reliability and thoroughness are problems that are often reduced to a minimum when the older worker holds the job.

Management has been gradually assuming more social responsibility in America, and this survey brings it out quite clearly in a rather unexpected area—the retirement age. Fixed retirement ages tend to rob the nation of many extremely valuable and experienced man-hours each year. Small pensions, inadequate incomes necessitating governmental assistance, the loneliness and idleness of those who are active but forcibly retired, and lack of consideration for the individual are some of the social problems which are involved. A flexible retirement program which considers the individual and his circumstances is one basic solution. The study demonstrated that such a policy is feasible, and that management is beginning to adopt such a course.

The book raises many questions but offers very few answers, for it was not intended to give an over-all picture of the situation as it is today, nor to explore all ramifications of the problem. Rather, it shows what is presently being done in several pertinent areas, and thereby indicates the early stage of development of the field and the great variety of informational needs. It should be an effective stimulus to research.

Although the book is based upon a study of industry, its findings are just as applicable for governmental agencies. The problems involved, the principles discussed, and the programs now in operation are ones which can be valuable for public officials.—JOHN ANSON FORD, *Chairman, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors*.

Program Budgeting: Theory and Practice. Frederick C. Mosher. Public Administration Service, 1313 E. 60th, Chicago 37, Illinois, 1954. 258 pp. \$5.00.

An understanding of the budget process provides an understanding of organization and administration. Although Mr. Mosher's book deals primarily with the Department of the Army, practitioners and students of public administration will find it both interesting and enlightening.

Career Perspectives in a Bureaucratic Setting. Dwaine Marvick. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1954. 150 pp. \$2.25.

The author of this booklet takes a new approach to the problem of reconciling agency goals and the interests of the individuals who carry on the work of governmental organizations. Through the use of empirical data, Dr. Marvick has identified some traits displayed by upper-level employees in a federal agency. The study throws new light on the attitudes of these employees toward their careers.

Labor-Management Relations in the Illinois State Service. Richard C. McFadden. University of Illinois, Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, 704 S. Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois, 1954. 58 pp. \$1.00.

This report is an analysis of labor-management relations in the administrative agencies of the Illinois State government as of 1952. It deals primarily with the Departments of Public Welfare, Public Works and Buildings (Division of Highways), and Public Safety, since these departments contain the bulk of the organized employees. The purpose of the study is to provide information regarding the nature of state employee relations and the extent of unionization and collective negotiations in the state service.

The Municipal Year Book, 1954. Clarence E. Ridley and Orin F. Nolting, editors. International City Managers' Association, 1313 East 60th Street, Chicago 37, Illinois, 1954. 613 pp. \$10.00.

The 1954 edition of this invaluable reference book is now off the press. The book contains data on form of government, salary of councilmen, pay rates for selected city jobs, salaries of municipal officials, changes in city areas, number of city employees and payrolls, personnel organization, working conditions, retirement systems, financial statistics, parking lots, fire and police data, directories of city officials, and model municipal ordinances. As in past years, articles in each field of municipal activity review the significant events of the past year.

personnel literature

abstracts of current articles

1954 CSA Abstractors

The following persons have accepted the editors' invitation to serve as abstractors of articles for the "Personnel Literature" section of *Public Personnel Review* during 1954.

Mrs. Erna W. Adler, Personnel Technician,
Municipal Civil Service Commission, New
Rochelle, New York

Richard Byler, Administrative Assistant, City
of Kenosha, Kenosha, Wisconsin

Earl R. Chambers, Personnel Director, Civil
Service Commission, St. Louis County, Mis-
souri

W. Brooke Graves, Legislative Reference Serv-
ice, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

Carl G. Johnson, Personnel Director, Oakland
County Board of Auditors, Pontiac, Michi-
gan

Daniel M. Kirkhuff, Personnel Division, Kan-
sas Department of Administration, Topeka,
Kansas

Mrs. Fay Katch, Personnel Director, Chicago
Housing Authority, Chicago, Illinois

Barbara J. Kingsley, Personnel Examiner,
Municipal Civil Service Board, Portland,
Oregon

Grace M. Pierson, Louis J. Kroeger and As-
sociates, Los Angeles, California

John W. Proctor, Personnel Director, Civil
Service Commission, Flint, Michigan

R. L. W. Ritchie, Chief Personnel Officer,
British Columbia Civil Service Commission,
Victoria, B.C., Canada

Mrs. Helen Thompson, Assistant Director of
Personnel, City of Atlanta, Georgia

Horace Turner, Personnel Technician, Civil
Service Commission, Cincinnati, Ohio

William J. Veeder, Personnel Director, City
of Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Tom Womble, Assistant Personnel Director,
Miami Beach, Florida

Personnel Administration

Emmerich, Herbert, and Belsley, G. Lyle, "The Federal Career Service—What Next?" *Public Administration Review*, Winter, 1954.—Present signs that the federal civil service is in danger are often viewed politically because of a change in administration. The threat lies as much in generally held attitudes and prejudices. The dual problem is to increase the flexibility and responsiveness of the public service to political change and simultaneously enhance its competency and stability. While natural and proper for a new administration to identify certain top positions to be filled by persons sympathetic to their program, the new Schedule C category of exempt positions may not provide the appropriate means of achieving a proper relationship between career employees and political officials. Through definition, so-called policy determination and confidential nature of Schedule C positions could be construed too inclusively and thus stunt the career service. High-ranking political policy-determining officers should be exempt from the career service and appointed by the administration. This different criterion might be substituted for the present Schedule C as a more valid approach to the problem. Past appointments to bureau chief positions have included career employees of great expertise and professional competence, thereby increasing the competence of the government agencies. The relationships of the bureau chiefs to their outside professional constituency and to Congressional committees, however, often make them peculiarly unresponsive to the heads of the departments of which their bureaus are a part and to the President who has ultimate responsibility for the way in which they discharge their duties. The time has come for a high level review of the role and status of the bureau chief position. Such a review might consider propositions as: (1) the appointment by rank, the inheritance of rank and compensation vested in the person, with rank and pay continuing on future government as-

signments; and (2) the right of the department head to appoint a bureau chief without senate confirmation from any where within the career service, and in exceptional cases from outside, the only indispensable condition being competency and ability to head an operating program. Government career persons appointed to bureau chief positions should retain their basic status and rights without tenure in the new position. In replacement, the career person should be transferred to another high level government position or retired with special privileges. The present political and policy determining role of the bureau chief should be diminished and carried at the level of the Office of the Secretary of the department. Adoption of such a policy would establish a clear distinction between political policy determination and the experts and career men of the government, as well as strengthen the responsibility and flexibility of the public service. A pervading sense of insecurity and lack of morale of career employees, due to no single cause, but contributed to in part by continued loyalty and security programs, reductions in force, temporary and indefinite appointments, and restricted promotions point toward a needed review of practices in order to retain the most efficient federal employees to staff the government at the level of competence its operations demand.—*Grace M. Pierson.*

Wall, Hugo, "Changing Concepts of Managerial Leadership." *Public Management*, March, 1954.—The council-manager plan arose in the years between 1900 and the first world war. It was during this period that we engaged in a search for social justice, a means to bring government back under control of the people, elimination of the spoils system, and introduction of efficiency into government. The city manager plan appeared to satisfy the aims of this type of thinking. Especially, it separated politics and administration. As the council-manager plan has unfolded, however, the kind of manager envisaged by the originators has failed to develop. The original mold cast the manager in the role of a colorless, inconspicuous expert director of administrative matters, a person who was unconcerned with what policies he was assigned to administer so long as he enjoyed complete freedom in his own narrow specialty, administration. This mold proved too small to fit the needs of American cities. Revisions in the city manager code of ethics between 1924 and 1952 reflect the changes which have been made to make the plan more acceptable in consideration of present-day needs. The restrictions have been removed from the man-

ager's role, but he is still limited by the code from publicly placing himself in opposition to the council on matters of policy. The future is not certain, but it appears that the manager's burdens of community leadership will increase rather than decline in the years ahead.—*Tom D. Womble.*

Watters, David M., "The Generalist vs. the Specialist." *Personnel Administration*, January, 1954.—Personnel management in smaller agencies, where the personnel technician is close to the line administrator, appears to be more successful than in "big government," where excessively narrow specialization works against an effective, well-coordinated personnel program. The line supervisor is confronted by advice from numerous experts interested in doing a first-class job in their own personnel specialty but with little concern for the reactions on the work of the operating shop as a whole. The Civil Service Commission of Canada, aware of the retarding influences of personnel specialization, has moved away from separate organization, classification and pay, recruiting and assignment branches to a series of units each containing an officer in the above specialties. Each unit is headed by an experienced officer, a generalist, familiar with all phases of personnel, whose responsibility it is to see that the departments serviced by his unit have to deal with as few different individuals as possible in getting their positions established and filled. These same "few individuals as possible" also deal with the departments on matters affecting the employee after assignment. The generalist has available to him, but not part of his unit, staff specialists in all phases of personnel, but he is the man whom the chief officers of his specified departments hold responsible for getting a man on the job and keeping him satisfied. The Canadian experience shows that the personnel generalist gets closer to all vital facts which make personnel administration a series of human relationships rather than a number of steps in a paper process. Because the procedures and techniques of the personnel specialist are essentially sound and designed to ensure uniformity of standards with equal and just treatment for all, the generalist must always be able to judge accurately when it is time to be firm about rules and regulations and when to relax them. This form of organization stresses the personnel function as a many-sided whole instead of a series of isolated specialties, with the result that the officials of the Commission are more attuned to the viewpoint of the departmental administrator who looks to them for service. A large agency can have generalists with

experts to assist him. The small agency can plan to develop generalists and rely for expert advice on agencies like the Civil Service Assembly. Some difficulty arises in this experiment in direct communication between the staff expert at the top of the central personnel agency and his counterpart on the staff of the generalist. Departmental operating chiefs, however, see no disadvantages in the use of generalists. There is a real place in the complete personnel program for the specialist and that is at the right hand of the generalist. The personnel specialist is not able to provide a balanced personnel program: the personnel generalist is.—*Erna W. Adler.*

York, Willbern, "Professionalization in the Public Service: Too Little or Too Much?" *Public Administration Review*, Winter, 1954.—In the 1936 edition of "The Municipal Yearbook" a new section was begun entitled "Professionalization of the Municipal Service." It discussed eleven types of professions among municipal employees, some old and others much newer. That the "professionalization" of the public service at all levels has proceeded apace, before that date and since, few would question. Old professions are branching, new ones arising and "skilled trade" vocations are being promoted to the "professional" level. Career opportunities in some of the professions are entirely or largely confined to the public service. The standard and orthodox attitude toward the rise of professions in the public service has been enthusiastically favorable. The interests of a profession, however, do not always coincide with the public interest, and there may be occasions when the profession tends to pursue its own rather than the public goals. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of this process of professionalization in the public service are noted below. *Advantages:* (1) minimum standards enforced and increase of technical competence; (2) insulation from pressures and controls of doubtful value; (3) more interchangeability of personnel; (4) interchange of information and ideas and promotion of study; (5) in-group loyalty and increased job satisfaction. *Disadvantages:* (1) competition with other portions of the population; (2) possible undue identification with a special outside group; (3) insulation from political control in the public interest; (4) frequent lack in internal democracy; (5) some limitation of service because of insistence on standards; (6) less transferability of personnel in some jurisdictions; (7) increased difficulty in coordination of governmental functions. The key problem is the relationship be-

tween professionalization and central democratic control. The spoils type of politics creates a need and demand for improvement of the service. Too much professionalization brings about a separation of functions that makes the need for integration pressing. A healthy balance between the two is essential.—*Fay W. Katch.*

Recruitment

Mandell, Milton M., and Greenberg, Sally H., "Selecting Americans for Overseas Employment." *Personnel*, March, 1954.—This very interesting article shows how and why such personal factors as what a man eats, thinks of foreigners, does with his spare time—irrelevant as they may seem to his job performance here at home—are of vital significance in connection with such performance in employment overseas. Under such circumstances, his wife's personal characteristics and ability to adjust to difficult or unfamiliar conditions (as shopping for unfamiliar items, with a new currency, in strange stores) may have more than the usual influence upon his success. Thus the evaluation of personal characteristics in selecting candidates for overseas assignments becomes even more important than it is in the domestic situation. Persons not well adjusted here would be ruled out automatically for such assignments. Marginal cases, manifesting satisfactory personal characteristics under "normal" conditions at home might confront insurmountable difficulties in adjusting to unfamiliar conditions abroad. Only those persons who are emotionally stable and well adjusted here can be expected to succeed on overseas assignments.

The problem of selection, always important and always difficult, is in this case unusually important and unusually difficult. Professional or technical competence is essential, but it alone is not enough. Other factors to be considered are the motivation of the applicant; his racial and religious prejudices; his attitudes toward foreign ways and customs as compared with our own; his willingness—if need be—to learn another language; his physical health and ability to adjust to a different climate. The authors believe that, whatever the method used, at least seven factors in addition to technical ability should be measured and evaluated. These recommendations, based upon the results of an extensive research program in overseas management conducted by the United States Civil Service Commission, suggests means by which companies can reduce costly failures through more accurate predictions of performance and through training.

1. *Rigidity.* Is the applicant rigid, or flexible and adaptable with regard to such personal matters as eating habits, recreation, social life?

2. *Health.* Good physical health is, for a number of more or less obvious reasons, an important selection factor.

3. *Emotional Maturity.* The applicant should not suffer from fits of depression and emotional extremes, should not indulge in self-pity or the tendency to blame others for his own misfortunes.

4. *Biases.* Applicant should be able to strike a happy medium between an attitude of criticism and opposition to everything differing from his own background and attitudes to complete and unquestioning acceptance of everything new ("going native"). Loss of his own sense of values tends to impair his usefulness.

5. *Inner Resources.* Has he the ability, when off duty, to busy and content himself with his own inner resources, with a minimum of dependence upon large parties, commercial sports and recreation, television, etc.—any or all of which may be unavailable.

6. *Motivation.* This is extremely difficult to evaluate because people frequently either do not know or deliberately conceal even from themselves the real reasons for their actions.

7. *Evaluation of the Wife.* The personal qualities and characteristics of the wife are probably as important as those of the husband, and so should be considered in making selections of personnel.

Selection is, however, just one step toward obtaining satisfactory overseas employees. Of additional value are training programs for employees and their families before they leave to orient them to the special problems involved; further training after arriving at the duty station, covering specific work problems in the new country; assurance of adequate security for the individual in terms of contract provisions or a career service; adequate educational, housing, and health emergency allowances; and outstanding executive and supervisory leadership—an element doubly important in service abroad. These are needed to prevent the loss of efficiency which can come even if outstanding persons are selected. Over-all, however, it would seem that improvement in selection methods is now of the first order of importance, with the need for training following closely behind. The other factors have generally been given extensive attention by companies with large-scale foreign operations.—*W. Brooke Graves.*

Sleight, Robert B., and Bell, Grace D., "Desirable Content of Letters of Recommendation."

Personnel Journal, April, 1954. Many letters of recommendation give only a highly favorable account of the applicant or are so vague and general as to be practically useless. Employers of professional and managerial personnel completed a questionnaire aimed at discovering the type of information sought in letters of recommendation. Responses from 148 questionnaires ranked the importance of 27 items, ranging from cooperativeness, honesty, initiative and social adjustment, to occupational ambitions, home adjustment and cultural background. Considerable emphasis was given to the "personality" type of item. Many respondents preferred personal contacts or telephone checks, rather than written letters of recommendation. Verbal opinions may be more frank, more revealing through vocal inflections, and more prompt. Written references or recommendations may take the form of brief and objective check lists, a combination form of check list and freely expressed comments, or the more time-consuming and subjective freely composed letter. Whatever the format of the recommendation, it should report on those intangible characteristics which might be called "personality traits." (Article contains a table showing items grouped according to their median order of importance.)—*Barbara J. Kingsley.*

Attitude Surveys

Torpey, William G., "The Professional Employee Replies to Management." *Personnel Administration*, January, 1954.—A recent article regarding management and the professional employee was replied to by 181 of the top scientists at the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, D. C. The scientists agreed with the major ideas in the article, pointing out only a few unsupported generalizations. Among other points, they felt that the average professional worker is not so deficient in his understanding of business methods as the author appeared to think. Patterns of opinion observable in the replies which were unfavorable to the work environment at the Laboratory were: restrictions on official travel to professional meetings; lengthy justifications necessary for materials, new personnel, etc.; the burdensome task of preparing job classification sheets; the belief that a professional employee needs administrative duties to obtain a promotion; the uneconomical use of professional skills; the slow service from administrative divisions; technical decisions by administrators; the lack of knowledge of the Navy and its scientific needs; the presence of administrative controls; and inadequate help from administrative assistants. The scientists expressed favorable opinions

about such Laboratory activities as the science education program offered under the auspices of the University of Maryland; the administrative assistant system; the nonexistence or ready solution of problems at the Laboratory; the general treatment accorded professional personnel; and the relatively high morale at the Laboratory. Results seemed to show that inadequate attention had been given to the delicate balance between administrative direction and scientific freedom as well as to the importance of the human relations approach to personnel management. No drastic administrative changes are contemplated; however, areas of possible friction are being reduced so that the professional man and the administrator working together may more effectively achieve the mission of the agency.—*Daniel M. Kirkhuff.*

Communication

MacKinney, Arthur C., and Jenkins, James J., "Readability of Employee's Letters in Relation to Occupational Level." *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, February, 1954.—Since 1948 a large number of articles have been written stressing the need to simplify the communications which management directs to employees. These articles have suggested the use of readability formulas (mainly those by Flesch) as one means of controlling the reading level of the communication. It is believed, in general, that the complexity of one's writing provides an indirect index to the complexity of material which one can readily comprehend. In this study, a total of 400 employee-written letters were randomly drawn from a 10 percent sample of 174,854 letters received in the General Motors "My Job Contest." A sample of 100 words from each letter was analyzed by the Flesch Reading Ease formula. The letters were then sorted by occupational level of the writer. The mean RE score and the standard deviation were computed for each of six occupational levels: salaried (skilled with responsibilities added; skilled; partially skilled) and hourly (skilled; semiskilled; unskilled). The salaried group included sub-managerial and clerical occupations involved in general clerical work, and the hourly group included craft and manual occupations. Mean differences between the groups were highly significant. A hierarchy of mean RE scores was found ranging from a mean of 54 (fairly difficult) for the "skilled" salary groups to a mean of 73 (fairly easy) for the "unskilled" hourly employees. The results were interpreted as confirming previous readability studies of industrial communications. Over 44 percent of the "skilled with responsibilities" salaried group write at the "difficult" level

while only 2 percent of the unskilled (hourly) group write at this same level. To reach 95 percent of all employees it would be necessary to write at the "easy" level of 80 to 90 (pulp fiction). If one were concerned only with reaching the top salary level group (skilled with responsibilities added) 94 percent of that group would find the "standard" level within their reading comprehension. This would be a reading ease level of 60 to 70 and is typical of digest magazines. (The article contains several tables of a statistical nature).—*Earl R. Chambers.*

Testing

Butler, William N., "Selection and Classification for Clerical Jobs." *Personnel Administration*, January, 1954.—The present method of determining eligibility and effecting certification to jobs in the federal service seems "to reflect a belief that the basic qualification requirements for clerical jobs below GS-5 in any line of work are the same." Contrasted to this generalization in the selection process is the specialization in the classification procedure, which establishes, titles, and codes "clerical jobs in various occupational groups, based on the subject-matter content of the jobs." Inconsistency between selection of applicants based on a single test and the classification of clerical jobs into a large number of categories prompted analysis of a variety of clerical jobs currently classified in various occupational series and revealed requirements common to all jobs of (1) basic intelligence and (2) aptitude, verbal or numerical, or both. "As clerical jobs below the grade five level are not primarily subject-matter jobs," the common elements in "Statistical Clerk" and "Budget and Fiscal Clerk" are numbers and their manipulation. "Editorial Clerks" and "Correspondence Clerks," on the other hand, "are allied in that they use common tools of words and grammar." To summarize, "it is not only entirely feasible to divide them only on the basis of their *primarily verbal or numerical features*" (plus special skills such as typing, stenography, office machine operation), but also such division of jobs and applicants would result in both program economy and program effectiveness. Admitting the validity of analysis which revealed the superficiality of distinction based on subject matter for clerical positions below the GS-5 level, a very few categories such as "Clerk (Numerical)," "Clerk (Verbal)," and "Clerk (General)" are proposed. To offset impaired employee morale, permissive titling of jobs based on individual duties is suggested. To apply such principles would not only effect a "realistic means of distinguishing clerical jobs" but would also establish a system of basic

simplicity for classification and placement functions. Accurate job descriptions can supply all essential information to offset reassignment and reduction-in-force, administrative problems which simplification of class title may appear to sacrifice. To measure general intelligence and verbal and/or numerical skill, a valid and reliable test divided into two principal parts, numerical and verbal, is suggested as adequate measurement of both intelligence and skill. By computing an over-all score to measure intelligence and also by computing grades on each of the two component abilities, a determination of the area for which applicants are better qualified and are to be certified could be ascertained. To summarize, modification of existent clerical tests to measure the ability aspect which has been predetermined is suggested; to prepare simplified and more realistic classifications and to utilize effectively this measurement in placement is endorsed.—*Helen Thompson.*

Training

Tannenbaum, Robert; Kallejian, Verne; and Weschler, Irving R., "Training Managers for Leadership." *Personnel*, January, 1954.—A successful manager is one who, in addition to being on top of the technical demands of his job, is also an effective leader. Many and varied training programs have been developed to help managers become effective leaders. They often include conference sessions supplemented by use of role-playing, "buzz" groups, etc. In such sessions the trainees usually are of similar rank, often having no on-the-job interpersonal relations. These training programs have serious limitations: (1) the trainee is removed from the social setting in which he customarily performs; (2) programs designed to impart human relations information may have little effect in inducing desirable changes in behavior; and (3) there may be little transfer of learning from the training to the work situation. One type of leadership training designed to minimize these limitations has two distinctive features: (1) the trainee group is *vertically structured*—all members of a given organizational unit are present (it can also be structured along *functional lines*); (2) the training emphasizes *the development of the trainee's sensitivities* to himself, others, and the ways people interact in groups. While leadership training can be restricted to (1) or (2), the suggested approach is to combine the two features. In this type of training, the trainer has six functions: (1) creating situations conducive to learning; (2) establishing a model of behavior; (3) introducing new values; (4) facilitating the flow of communication; (5) participating as an "expert"; and (6) de-

veloping interpersonal skills in group members. The trainer in this type program must have special experience or training. Introduction of this type training requires careful preparation and may have to be introduced gradually. Resistance may appear in many forms. Trainees may expect a more formal type program and must learn how to deal with the reality of their status in the group hierarchy. The meetings of the group differ from other meetings (such as staff meetings) in several ways: (1) the relative lack of a planned agenda; (2) participation in leadership (not restricted to the high-status member); and (3) motivation of the group (not centered on work-orientated situations). The mechanics of the program suggest: (1) at least weekly meetings; (2) sessions lasting one and one-half or two hours; and (3) the group remain the same. Vertically structured training in sensitivity is likely to yield: (1) changes in interpersonal behavior which will be carried over to work relations; (2) awareness of self, others, and interpersonal relations, rather than the acquisition of book knowledge; and (3) a more cohesive working team. The development of this type training reflects a growing recognition that interpersonal, on-the-job problems cannot be ignored. While it includes elements of other methods used in dealing with such problems, it is focused only on those interpersonal problems relevant to work relations. Although this training cannot deal with interpersonal problems imbedded in the personality structure, it can deal with problems resulting from a lack of a free flow of interpersonal communication.—*William J. Veeder.*

Physical Examinations

Klein, R. N., and Bisell, Dwight M., M.D., "A Medical Audit for City Employees." *Public Management*, February 1954.—Although pre-employment physical examinations are common, few cities have adopted a complete program of formal job health standards and periodic examinations. San Jose's (Cal.) program, costing about \$5.30 or \$8.90 per employee annually (588 employees) has proved a good investment for the city in reducing accident claims, impaired performance, and in gaining employee appreciation. The first step was to draft realistic health standards, determined jointly with a city employed physician. Pre-examination educational leaflets pointed out the advantages to the employee, and that no employee would ordinarily be retired prematurely as a result. Examinations, which required at least 20 minutes, were by physicians of the employee's sex and were preceded by x-rays, blood, vision, hearing, dental, and other labora-

tory tests. Four employee health classifications were used: Class A employees are qualified unrestrictedly for any physical labor; Class B includes minor defects, but of sufficient importance to refer to department heads; Class C covers major defects, but not disqualifying for some jobs; and Class D is for those who should not be employed. Only four San Jose employees were classified "D," but in every case it was important for both the city and the employee that they be retired. Standards facilitate transfers to less demanding work when that is necessary. Employees are examined after an illness or accident lasting ten days and before retirement; employees over 45 receive annual periodic examinations, those under 45 every three years. Examination results are available to employees, who promptly took corrective action in many cases.—Richard Byler.

Employee Unions

Dymond, W. R., "The Role of the Union in the Public Service as Opposed to its Role in Private Business." *Professional Public Service*, January, 1954.—Distinctive characteristics of unionism are (1) independence from control by the employer, (2) the bargaining unit of representation, (3) collective bargaining procedures, (4) administration of the agreement. The question arises if unionism is likely to be a success in governmental employment relationships, and what special problems might be involved. Governments and private corporations are superficially similar, although with different aims, and many of the conditions leading to the growth of unionism in industry exist in large-scale government as well. The scope for arbitrary action in government is probably less than in private business because of the protection provided by civil service laws, but nevertheless there is a great deal of room for the growth of inequality of treatment. Special problems of unionism in government include: (1) Difficulty of independence from employer in organizations with no clear-cut line of demarcation between officials and rank-and-file respecting eligibility for membership. (2) Type of bargaining unit, varying from an all-inclusive industrial type which is administratively convenient, to multiple units based on departmental, occupational, or geographic lines which will likely have less bargaining power. (3) Determining who on the official side have sufficient power to make reasonably binding decisions in bargaining. (4) The concept of sovereign power. The federal government argues there can be no bargaining agent for civil servants comparable to private industry which pays wages from revenues derived from pay-

ments for goods or services. Government funds are voted by Parliament, and it is felt Parliament alone can discharge that responsibility. A number of governments, however, have signed agreements differing only from industry in that the sovereign power can abrogate or change a collective agreement at any time. (5) Determining appropriate standards of wages and conditions, since the economic limitations of private business do not apply to governments. (6) Impracticability of the strike as a bargaining weapon, the realistic alternative to which is political pressure. Power would therefore reside in the quality and amount of public sympathy which either side could mobilize. (7) Compulsory arbitration places a sovereign legislature in the position of having to accept decisions from an independent agency which is not responsible to it. The author concludes that unions suitably modified in terms of organization and methods have a constructive role to play in public employment.—R. L. W. Ritchie.

Discipline

Johnson, Earl P., "How to Correct Workers." *Personnel Journal*, February, 1954.—Many supervisors put off correcting workers because they feel inadequate to do the job in such a way that it will be accepted in good spirit and be beneficial to the worker. Recognizing that supervisors are not qualified to "analyze the deep-seated psychological causes and effects in human behavior", the Seattle Chapter of the Pacific Northwest Personnel Management Association has developed an outline for guiding supervisors in conducting corrective or disciplinary interviews. 1. *Physical Setup of the Interview*. The interview should be in private and all relevant materials and equipment should have been prepared in advance. 2. *Timing of the Interview*. The interview should be conducted as soon as possible after the incident, taking into account work schedules and allowing for a cooling-off period for both the supervisor and the staff member. The staff member should be informed as nearly as possible of the time of the interview. 3. *Preparation for the Interview*. The supervisor should have clearly in mind what is to be accomplished and should know the facts of the case and the past performance of the staff member. He should know his own biases and separate facts from opinions. 4. *Interviewer's Attitude*. The interviewer should use a "we" and "our" frame of reference, be sincere, serious, courteous, and assume that the staff member is interested in doing a good job. He should avoid "personalities" and not humiliate the staff member. 5. *The Interview Itself*. The interviewer should

be conversational and attempt to relieve unnecessary tension. He should state the problem specifically and clearly and present his understanding of the situation along with the views of other staff members. The staff member should be commended for good factors relating to his past performance. He should be given adequate time and opportunity to present his side and make suggestions on how the situation may be improved. The interviewer should clarify the need for improvement in terms of the welfare of the organization and the staff member and should affirm the organization's interest in the staff member's welfare. A plan for the future should be agreed upon, the essential points of the interview should be recorded, and the interview should be terminated on a friendly note with the assumption that success will follow. 6. *Follow-up after Interview.* The supervisor should make a friendly comment to the staff member before he leaves work that day. Future performance should be closely checked and if improvement is shown, the employee should be made aware that the supervisor knows it.—*John W. Proctor.*

Job Evaluation

Sayles, Leonard R., "Worker Values in Job Evaluation; Impact of Job Evaluation on Worker Attitudes." *Personnel*, January, 1954.—Worker resistance will be found to job evaluation plans even though technically sound and capably administered, and even though earnings are maintained and often increased. Discrepancies of concept of relative worth of jobs among the worker, union, and management cause this resistance. The worker questions judgment of job study men, and suspects that neither management nor union will preserve "impartial" operation of the plan. One drawback to worker acceptance of job evaluation stems from the objective approach sought by job analysts: logical and coherent proposals based on job facts may differ from traditional worker ranking of jobs and run counter to the "social" system of job ranking which has developed among the workers. Another unfortunate side effect of job studies derives from their success in communicating to workers job rates and relationships which hitherto were probably not too well known; dissatisfaction is generated as a direct result of workers becoming better informed. Job evaluation further emphasizes the job class as the standard of value; this can lead to jealous concern of workers as to their new job class, regardless of pay involved. Workers further resent the changes in traditional lines of promotion which new job plans often make, regardless of validity of

such changes. Workers often place great value on certain aspects of a job which may have little to do with job duties governing evaluation. Such aspects as chance for incentive pay and premium earnings, congenial fellow workers, skillful and friendly supervision, relative freedom from fluctuations of work and lay-off, etc. A general difficulty with the foregoing worker attitudes is that, while real, they do not remain fixed; there is no constant ranking of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. One factor which causes fluctuation of attitude is economic conditions. The pitfalls referred to involve intangible and subjective values on the part of the worker. They can be avoided or alleviated by integrating a job evaluation program closely with promotional policy and seniority agreements. Systems of promotion should conform as closely as possible to worker ideas of advantageous or beneficial jobs. Job evaluation should also avoid narrowing of jobs into specialties that hamper flexible operations, discourage worker learning, and increase the expense of job training and promotion. The job evaluation program should take into account the interests of various work groups to foster internal harmony and establish satisfactory promotional ladders. These needs can be defined only as management thoroughly understands actual operation of the seniority and promotional system, incentive plans and other personnel programs in addition to job evaluation. An important reason why management must give attention to satisfaction of worker groups is the trend toward worker attachment for one place of work. Pensions, seniority, family ties, etc. contribute to this limited mobility. The employer cannot assume that a disgruntled worker will quit and go elsewhere; low turnover does not necessarily mean satisfied workmen. This attachment to the job means that management must make all job policies and benefits as equitable as possible among the different groups.—*Horace Turner.*

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